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THE PRINCESS CASAMASSIMA.

BOOK FIRST.

I.

"Oh, yes, I dare say I can find the child, if you would like to see him," Miss Pynsent said; she had a fluttering wish to assent to every suggestion made by her visitor, whom she regarded as a high and rather terrible personage. To look for the little boy, she came out of her small parlor, which she had been ashamed to exhibit in so untidy a state, with paper "patterns" lying about on the furniture, and snippings of stuff scattered over the carpet — she came out of this somewhat stuffy sanctuary, dedicated at once to social intercourse and to the ingenious art to which her life had been devoted, and, opening the house-door, turned her eyes up and down the little street. It would presently be tea-time, and she knew that at that solemn hour Hyacinth narrowed the circle of his wanderings. She was anxious and impatient, and in a little fever of excitement and complacency, not wanting to keep Mrs. Bowerbank waiting, though she sat there, heavily and consideringly, as if she meant to stay; and wondering not a little whether the object of her quest would have a dirty face. Mrs. Bowerbank had intimated so definitely that she thought it remarkable on Miss Pynsent's part to

have taken care of him, gratuitously, for so many years, that the little dress-maker, whose imagination took flights about every one but herself, and who had never been conscious of an exemplary benevolence, suddenly aspired to appear, throughout, as devoted to the child as she had struck her solemn, substantial guest as being, and felt how much she should like him to come in fresh and frank, and looking as pretty as he sometimes did. Miss Pynsent, who blinked confusedly as she surveyed the outer prospect, was very much flushed, partly with the agitation of what Mrs. Bowerbank had told her, and partly because, when she offered that lady a drop of something refreshing, at the end of so long an expedition, she had said she could n't think of touching anything unless Miss Pynsent would keep her company. The chiffonier (as Amanda was always careful to call it), beside the fireplace, yielded up a small bottle which had formerly contained eau-de-cologne, and which now exhibited half a pint of a rich gold-colored liquid. Miss Pynsent was very delicate; she lived on tea and watercress, and she kept the little bottle in the chiffonier only for great emergencies. She didn't like hot brandy and water, with a lump or two of sugar, but she

partook of half a tumbler on the present occasion, which was of a highly exceptional kind. At this time of day the boy was often planted in front of the little sweet-shop on the other side of the street, an establishment where periodical literature as well as tough toffy and hard lollipops was dispensed, and where song-books and pictorial sheets were attractively exhibited in the small-paned, dirty window. He used to stand there for half an hour at a time, spelling out the first pages of the romances in the *Family Herald* and the *London Journal*, and admiring the obligatory illustration, in which the noble characters (they were always of the highest birth) were presented to the carnal eye. When he had a penny he spent only a fraction of it on stale sugar-candy; with the remaining half-penny he always bought a ballad, with a vivid woodcut at the top. Now, however, he was not at his post of contemplation; nor was he visible anywhere to Miss Pynsent's impatient glance.

"Millicent Henning, tell me quickly, have you seen my child?" These words were addressed by Miss Pynsent to a little girl who sat on the doorstep of the adjacent house, nursing a dingy doll, and who had an extraordinary luxuriance of dark brown hair, surmounted by a torn straw hat. Miss Pynsent pronounced her name Enning.

The child looked up from her dandling and twitching, and after a stare of which the blankness was somewhat exaggerated, replied: "Law no, Miss Pynsent, I never see him."

"Aren't you always messing about with him, you naughty little girl?" the dressmaker returned, with sharpness. "Is n't he round the corner, playing marbles, or — or some jumping game?" Miss Pynsent went on, trying to be suggestive.

"I assure *you*, he never plays nothing," said Millicent Henning, with a mature manner, which she bore out by

adding, "And I don't know why I should be called naughty, neither."

"Well, if you want to be called good, please go and find him, and tell him there's a lady here come on purpose to see him, this very instant." Miss Pynsent waited a moment, to see if her injunction would be obeyed, but she got no satisfaction beyond another gaze of deliberation, which made her feel that the child's perversity was as great as the beauty, somewhat soiled and dimmed, of her insolent little face. She turned back into the house, with an exclamation of despair, and as soon as she had disappeared, Millicent Henning sprang erect and began to race down the street in the direction of another, which crossed it. I take no unfair advantage of the innocence of childhood in saying that the motive of this young lady's flight was not a desire to be agreeable to Miss Pynsent, but an extreme curiosity on the subject of the visitor who wanted to see Hyacinth Robinson. She wished to participate, if only in imagination, in the interview that might take place, and she was moved also by a quick revival of friendly feeling for the boy, from whom she had parted only half an hour before with considerable asperity. She was not a very clinging little creature, and there was no one in her own domestic circle to whom she was much attached; but she liked to kiss Hyacinth when he did n't push her away and tell her she was tiresome. It was in this action and epithet he had indulged half an hour ago; but she had reflected rapidly (while she stared at Miss Pynsent) that this was the worst he had ever done. Millicent Henning was only eight years of age, but she knew there was worse in the world than that.

Mrs. Bowerbank, in a leisurely, roundabout way, wandered off to her sister, Mrs. Chipperfield, whom she had come into that part of the world to see, and the whole history of the dropsical

tendencies of whose husband, an undertaker with a business that had been a blessing because you could always count on it, she unfolded to Miss Pynsent between the sips of a second glass. She was a high-shouldered, towering woman, and suggested squareness as well as a pervasion of the upper air, so that Amanda reflected that she must be very difficult to fit, and had a sinking at the idea of the number of pins she would take. Her sister had nine children and she herself had seven, the eldest of whom she left in charge of the others when she went to her service. She was on duty at the prison only during the day; she had to be there at seven in the morning, but she got her evenings at home, quite regular and comfortable. Miss Pynsent thought it wonderful she could talk of comfort in such a life as that, but could easily imagine she should be glad to get away at night, for at that time the place must be much more terrible.

"And are n't you afraid of them — ever?" she inquired, looking up at her visitor, with her little, heated face.

Mrs. Bowerbank was very slow, and considered her so long before replying that she felt herself to be, in an alarming degree, in the eye of the law; for who could be more closely connected with the administration of justice than a female turnkey, especially so big and majestic a one? "I expect they are more afraid of me," she replied at last; and it was an idea into which Miss Pynsent could easily enter.

"And at night I suppose they rave quite awful," the little dressmaker suggested, feeling vaguely that prisons and madhouses came very much to the same.

"Well, if they do, we hush 'em up," Mrs. Bowerbank remarked, rather portentously; while Miss Pynsent fidgeted to the door again, without results, to see if the child had become visible. She observed to her guest that she couldn't call it anything but contrary that he

should not turn up, when he knew so well, most days in the week, when his tea was ready. To which Mrs. Bowerbank rejoined, fixing her companion again with the steady orb of justice, "And do he have his tea, that way, by himself, like a little gentleman?"

"Well, I try to give it to him tidy-like, at a suitable hour," said Miss Pynsent, guiltily. "And there might be some who would say that, for the matter of that, he *is* a little gentleman," she added, with an effort at mitigation which, as she immediately became conscious, only involved her more deeply.

"There are people silly enough to say anything. If it's your parents that settle your station, the child has n't much to be thankful for," Mrs. Bowerbank went on, in the manner of a woman accustomed to looking facts in the face.

Miss Pynsent was very timid, but she adored the aristocracy, and there were elements in the boy's life which she was not prepared to sacrifice even to a person who represented such a possibility of grating bolts and clanking chains. "I suppose we ought n't to forget that his father was very high," she suggested, appealingly, with her hands clasped tightly in her lap.

"His father? Who knows who *he* was? He does n't set up for having a father, does he?"

"But, surely, was n't it proved that Lord Frederick?"

"My dear woman, nothing was proved except that she stabbed his lordship in the back with a very long knife, that he died of the blow, and that she got the full sentence. What does such a piece as that know about fathers? The less said about the poor child's papa, the better!"

This view of the case caused Miss Pynsent fairly to gasp, for it pushed over, with a touch, a certain tall imaginative structure which she had been piling up for years. Even as she heard it crash around her she could n't forbear

the attempt to save at least some of the material. "Really — really," she panted, "she never had to do with any one but the nobility!"

Mrs. Bowerbank surveyed her hostess with an expressionless eye. "My dear young lady, what does a respectable little body like you, that sits all day with her needle and scissors, know about the doings of a wicked, low foreigner that carries a knife? I was there when she came in, and I know to what she had sunk. Her conversation was choice, I assure you."

"Oh, it's very dreadful, and of course I know nothing in particular," Miss Pynsent quavered. "But she was n't low when I worked at the same place with her, and she often told me she would do nothing for any one that was n't at the very top."

"She might have talked to you of something that would have done you both more good," Mrs. Bowerbank remarked, while the dressmaker felt rebuked in the past as well as in the present. "At the very top, poor thing! Well, she's at the very bottom now. If she was n't low when she worked, it's a pity she did n't stick to her work; and as for pride of birth, that's an article I recommend your young friend to leave to others. You had better believe what I say, because I'm a woman of the world."

Indeed she was, as Miss Pynsent felt, to whom all this was very terrible, letting in the cold light of the penal system on a dear, dim little theory. She had cared for the child because maternity was in her nature, and this was the only manner in which fortune had put it in her path to become a mother. She had as few belongings as the baby, and it had seemed to her that he would add to her importance in the little world of Lomax Place (if she kept it a secret how she came by him), quite in the proportion in which she should contribute to his maintenance. Her weakness and

loneliness went out to his, and in the course of time this united desolation was peopled by the dressmaker's romantic mind with a hundred consoling evocations. The boy proved neither a dunce nor a reprobate; but what endeared him to her most was her conviction that he belonged, "by the left hand," as she had read in a novel, to an ancient and exalted race, the list of whose representatives and the record of whose alliances she had once (when she took home some work and was made to wait, alone, in a lady's boudoir) had the opportunity of reading in a fat red book, eagerly and tremblingly consulted. She bent her head before Mrs. Bowerbank's overwhelming logic, but she felt in her heart that she should n't give the child up, for all that, that she believed in him still, and that she recognized, as distinctly as she revered, the quality of her betters. To believe in Hyacinth, for Miss Pynsent, was to believe that he *was* the son of the extremely immoral Lord Frederick. She had told him so, from the earliest age, and as Mrs. Bowerbank would be sure not to approve of such indiscretions, Miss Pynsent prayed she might not question her on that part of the business. It was not that, when it was necessary, the little dressmaker had any scruple about using the arts of prevarication; she was a kind and innocent creature, but she told fibs as freely as she invented trimmings. She had, however, not yet been questioned by an emissary of the law, and her heart beat faster when Mrs. Bowerbank said to her, in deep tones, with an effect of abruptness, "And pray, Miss Pynsent, does the child know it?"

"Know about Lord Frederick?" Miss Pynsent palpitated.

"Bother Lord Frederick! Know about his mother."

"Oh, I can't say that. I have never told him."

"But has any one else told him?"

To this inquiry Miss Pynsent's an-



swer was more prompt and more proud; it was with an agreeable sense of having conducted herself with extraordinary wisdom and propriety that she replied, "How could any one know? I have never breathed it to a creature!"

Mrs. Bowerbank gave utterance to no commendation; she only put down her empty glass and wiped her large mouth with much thoroughness and deliberation. Then she said, as if it were as cheerful an idea as, in the premises, she was capable of expressing, "Ah, well, there 'll be plenty, later on, to give him all information!"

"I pray God he may live and die without knowing it!" Miss Pynsent cried, with eagerness.

Her companion gazed at her with a kind of professional patience. "You don't keep your ideas together. How can he go to her, then, if he's never to know?"

"Oh, did you mean she would tell him?" Miss Pynsent responded, plaintively.

"Tell him! He won't need to be told, once she gets hold of him and gives him — what she told me."

"What she told you?" Miss Pynsent repeated, open-eyed.

"The kiss her lips have been fished for for years."

"Ah, poor desolate woman!" the little dressmaker murmured, with her pity gushing up again. "Of course he'll see she's fond of him," she pursued, simply. Then she added, with an inspiration more brilliant, "We might tell him she's his aunt!"

"You may tell him she's his grandmother, if you like. But it's all in the family."

"Yes, on that side," said Miss Pynsent, musingly and irrepressibly. "And will she speak French?" she inquired. "In that case he won't understand."

"Oh, a child will understand its own mother, whatever she speaks," Mrs. Bowerbank returned, declining to ad-

minister a superficial comfort. But she subjoined, opening the door for escape from a prospect which bristled with dangers, "Of course, it's just according to your own conscience. You need n't bring the child at all, unless you like. There's many a one that would n't. There's no compulsion."

"And would nothing be done to me, if I did n't?" poor Miss Pynsent asked, unable to rid herself of the impression that it was somehow the arm of the law that was stretched out to touch her.

"The only thing that could happen to you would be that he might throw it up against you later," the lady from the prison observed, with a gloomy impartiality.

"Yes, indeed, if he were to know that I had kept him back."

"Oh, he'd be sure to know, one of these days. We see a great deal of that — the way things come out," said Mrs. Bowerbank, whose view of life seemed to abound in cheerless contingencies. "You must remember that it is her dying wish, and that you may have it on your conscience."

"That's a thing I *never* could abide!" the little dressmaker exclaimed, with great emphasis and a visible shiver; after which she picked up various scattered remnants of muslin and cut paper, and began to roll them together with a desperate and mechanical haste. "It's quite awful, to know what to do — if you are very sure she *is* dying."

"Do you mean she's shamming? we have plenty of that — but we know how to treat 'em."

"Lord, I suppose so," murmured Miss Pynsent; while her visitor went on to say that the unfortunate person on whose behalf she had undertaken this solemn pilgrimage might live a week and might live a fortnight, but if she lived a month, would violate (as Mrs. Bowerbank might express herself) every established law of nature, being reduced to skin and bone, with nothing

left of her but the main desire to see her child.

"If you're afraid of her talking, it is n't much she'd be able to say. And we should n't allow you more than about eight minutes," Mrs. Bowerbank pursued, in a tone that seemed to refer itself to an iron discipline.

"I'm sure I should n't want more; that would be enough to last me many a year," said Miss Pynsent, plaintively. And then she added, with another illumination, "Don't you think he might throw it up against me that I *did* take him? People might tell him about her in later years; but if he had n't seen her, he would n't be obliged to believe them."

Mrs. Bowerbank considered this a moment, as if it were rather a super-subtle argument, and then answered, quite in the spirit of her official pessimism, "There is one thing you may be sure of: whatever you decide to do, as soon as ever he grows up he will make you wish you had done the opposite." Mrs. Bowerbank called it *opposite*.

"Oh, dear, then, I'm glad it will be a long time."

"It will be ever so long, if once he gets it into his head! At any rate, you must do as you think best. Only, if you come, you must n't come when it's all over."

"It's too impossible to decide."

"It is, indeed," said Mrs. Bowerbank, with superior consistency. And she seemed more placidly grim than ever when she remarked, gathering up her loosened shawl, that she was much obliged to Miss Pynsent for her civility, and had been quite freshened up: her visit had so completely deprived her hostess of that sort of calm. Miss Pynsent gave the fullest expression to her perplexity in the supreme exclamation:

"If you could only wait and see the child, I'm sure it would help you to judge!"

"My dear woman, I don't want to judge—it's none of our business!" Mrs. Bowerbank exclaimed; and she had no sooner uttered the words than the door of the room creaked open, and a small boy stood there, gazing at her. Her eyes rested on him a moment, and then, most unexpectedly, she gave an inconsequent cry. "Is that the child? Oh, Lord o' mercy, don't take *him*!"

"Now *ain't* he shrinking and sensitive?" demanded Miss Pynsent, who had pounced upon him, and, holding him an instant at arm's length, appealed eagerly to her visitor. "Ain't he delicate and high-bred, and would n't he be thrown into a state?" Delicate as he might be, the little dressmaker shook him smartly for his naughtiness in being out of the way when he was wanted, and brought him to the big, square-faced, deep-voiced lady, who took up, as it were, all that side of the room. But Mrs. Bowerbank laid no hand upon him; she only dropped her gaze from a tremendous height, and her forbearance seemed a tribute to that fragility of constitution on which Miss Pynsent desired to insist, just as her continued gravity was an implication that this scrupulous woman might well not know what to do.

"Speak to the lady, nicely, and tell her you are very sorry to have kept her waiting."

The child hesitated a moment, while he reciprocated Mrs. Bowerbank's inspection, and then he said, with a strange, cool, conscious indifference (Miss Pynsent instantly recognized it as his aristocratic manner), "I don't think she can have been in a very great hurry."

There was irony in the words, for it is a remarkable fact that, even at the age of ten, Hyacinth Robinson was ironical; but the subject of his allusion, who was not nimble, withal, appeared not to interpret it; and she rejoined only by remarking, over his head, to

Miss Pynsent, "It's the very face of her over again!"

"Of *her*? But what do you say to Lord Frederick?"

"I *have* seen lords that was n't so dainty!"

Miss Pynsent had seen very few lords, but she entered, with a passionate thrill, into this generalization; controlling herself, however, for she remembered the child was tremendously sharp, sufficiently to declare, in an edifying tone, that he would look more like what he ought to, if his face were a little cleaner.

"It was probably Millicent Henning dirtied my face, when she kissed me," the boy announced, with slow gravity, looking all the while at Mrs. Bowerbank. He exhibited not a symptom of shyness.

"Millicent Henning is a very bad little girl; she'll come to no good," said Miss Pynsent, with familiar decision, and also, considering that the young lady in question had been her effective messenger, with marked ingratitude.

Against this qualification the child instantly protested. "Why is she bad? I don't think she is bad; I like her very much." It came over him that he had too hastily shifted to her shoulders the responsibility of his unseemly appearance, and he wished to make up to her for that betrayal. He dimly felt that nothing but that particular accusation could have pushed him to it, for he hated people who were not fresh, who had smutches and streaks. Millicent Henning generally had two or three, which she borrowed from her doll, into whom she was always rubbing her nose, and whose dinginess was contagious. It was quite inevitable she should have left her mark under his own nose, when she claimed her reward for coming to tell him about the lady who wanted him.

Miss Pynsent held the boy against her knee, trying to present him so that

Mrs. Bowerbank should agree with her about his having the air of race. He was exceedingly diminutive, even for his years, and though his appearance was not positively sickly, it seemed written in his attenuated little person that he would never be either tall or strong. His dark blue eyes were separated by a wide interval, which increased the fairness and sweetness of his face, and his abundant, curly hair, which grew thick and long, had the golden brownness predestined to elicit exclamations of delight from ladies when they take the inventory of a child. His features were smooth and pretty; his head was set upon a slim little neck; his expression, grave and clear, showed a quick perception as well as a great credulity; and he was altogether, in his innocent smallness, a refined and interesting figure.

"Yes, he's one that would be sure to remember," said Mrs. Bowerbank, mentally contrasting him with the undeveloped members of her own brood, who had never been retentive of anything but the halfpence which they occasionally contrived to filch from her. Her eyes descended to the details of his toilet: the careful mending of his short breeches and his long, colored stockings, which she was in a position to appreciate, as well as the knot of bright ribbon which the dressmaker had passed into his collar, slightly crumpled by Miss Henning's embrace. Of course Miss Pynsent had only one to look after, but her visitor was obliged to recognize that she had the highest standard in respect to buttons. "And you *do* turn him out so it's a pleasure," she went on, noting the ingenious patches in the child's shoes, which, to her mind, were repaired for all the world like those of a little nobleman.

"I'm sure you're very civil," said Miss Pynsent, in a state of severe exaltation. "There's never a needle but mine has come near him. That's ex-

actly what I think: the impression would go so deep."

"Do you want to see me only to look at me?" Hyacinth inquired, with a candor which, though unstudied, had again much of the force of satire.

"I'm sure it's very kind of the lady to notice you at all!" cried his protectress, giving him an ineffectual jerk. "You're no bigger than a flea; there are many that would n't spy you out."

"You'll find he's big enough, I expect, when he begins to go," Mrs. Bowerbank remarked, tranquilly; and she added that now she saw how he was turned out she could n't but feel that the other side was to be considered. In her effort to be discreet, on account of his being present (and so precociously attentive), she became slightly enigmatical; but Miss Pynsent gathered her meaning, which was that it was very true the child would take everything in and keep it: but at the same time it was precisely his being so attractive that made it a kind of sin not to gratify the poor woman, who, if she knew what he looked like to-day, would n't forgive his adoptive mamma for not producing him. "Certainly, in her place, I should go off easier if I had seen them curls," Mrs. Bowerbank declared, with a flight of maternal imagination which brought her to her feet, while Miss Pynsent felt that she was leaving her dreadfully ploughed up, and without any really fertilizing seed having been sown. The little dressmaker packed the child upstairs to tidy himself for his tea, and while she accompanied her visitor to the door, told her that if she would have a little more patience with her, she would think, a day or two longer, what was best, and write to her when she should have decided. Mrs. Bowerbank continued to move in a realm superior to poor Miss Pynsent's scruples and timidities, and her impartiality gave her hostess a high idea of her respectability; but the way was a little smoothed when, after Amanda had

moaned once more, on the threshold, helplessly and irrelevantly, "Ain't it a pity she's so bad?" the ponderous lady from the prison rejoined, in those tones which seemed meant to resound through corridors of stone, "I assure you, there's a many that's much worse!"

## II.

Miss Pynsent, when she found herself alone, felt that she was really quite upside down; for the event that had just occurred had never entered into her calculations: the very nature of the case had seemed to preclude it. All she knew and all she wished to know was that in one of the dreadful institutions constructed for such purposes her quondam comrade was serving out the sentence that had been substituted for the other (the unspeakable horror) almost when the halter was already round her neck. As there was no question of *that* concession being stretched any further, poor Florentine seemed only a little more dead than other people, having no decent tombstone to mark the place where she lay. Miss Pynsent had therefore never thought again of her dying; she had no idea to what prison she had been committed on being removed from Newgate (she wished to keep her mind a blank about the matter, in the interest of the child), and it could not occur to her that out of such silence and darkness a voice would reach her again, especially a voice that she should really have to listen to. Miss Pynsent would have said, before Mrs. Bowerbank's visit, that she had no account to render to any one; that she had taken up the child (who might have starved in the gutter) out of charity, and had brought him up, poor and precarious as her own subsistence had been, without a penny's help from another source; that the mother had forfeited every right and title; and that this had been understood between them

—if anything, in so dreadful an hour, could have been said to be understood — when she went to see her at Newgate (that terrible episode, nine years before, overshadowed all Miss Pynsent's other memories), — went to see her because Florentine had sent for her (a name, face, and address coming up out of the still recent but sharply separated past of their working-girl years), as the one friend to whom she could appeal with some chance of a pitying answer. The effect of violent emotion, with Miss Pynsent, was not to make her sit with idle hands, or fidget about to no purpose; under its influence, on the contrary, she threw herself into little jobs, as a fugitive takes to by-paths, and clipped and cut, and stitched and basted, as if she were running a race with hysterics. And while her hands, her scissors, her needle flew, an infinite succession of fantastic possibilities trotted through her confused little head; she had a furious imagination, and the act of reflection, in her mind, was always a panorama of figures and scenes. She had had her picture of the future, painted in rather rosy hues, hung up before her now for a good many years; but it seemed to her that Mrs. Bowerbank's heavy hand had suddenly punched a hole in the canvas. It must be added, however, that if Amanda's thoughts were apt to be bewildering visions, they sometimes led her to make up her mind, and on this particular September evening she arrived at a momentous decision. What she made up her mind to was to take advice, and in pursuance of this view she rushed down-stairs and, jerking Hyacinth away from his simple but unfinished repast, packed him across the street to tell Mr. Vetch (if he had not yet started for the theatre) that she begged he would come in to see her when he came home that night, as she had something very particular she wished to say to him. It did n't matter if he should be very late, he could come in

at any hour — he would see her light in the window — and he would do her a real mercy. Miss Pynsent knew it would be of no use for her to go to bed; she felt as if she should never close her eyes again. Mr. Vetch was her most distinguished friend; she had an immense appreciation of his cleverness and knowledge of the world, as well as of the purity of his taste in matters of conduct and opinion; and she had already consulted him about Hyacinth's education. The boy needed no urging to go on such an errand, for he, too, had his ideas about the little fiddler, the second violin in the orchestra of the Vauxhall Theatre. Mr. Vetch had once obtained for the pair an order for two seats at a pantomime, and for Hyacinth the impression of that ecstatic evening had consecrated him, placed him forever in the golden glow of the footlights. There were things in life of which, even at the age of ten, it was a conviction of the boy's that it would be his fate never to see enough, and one of them was the wonder-world illuminated by those playhouse lamps. But there would be chances, perhaps, if one did n't lose sight of Mr. Vetch; he might open the door again; he was a privileged, magical mortal, who went to the play every night.

He came in to see Miss Pynsent about midnight; as soon as she heard the lame tinkle of the bell she went to the door to let him in. He was an original, in the fullest sense of the word: a lonely, disappointed, embittered, cynical little man, whose musical organization had been sterile, who had the nerves, the sensibilities, of a gentleman, and whose fate had condemned him, for the last ten years, to play a fiddle at a second-rate theatre for a few shillings a week. He had ideas of his own about everything, and they were not always very comforting. For Amanda Pynsent he represented art, literature (the literature of the play-bill), and philosophy, and she

always felt about him as if he belonged to a higher social sphere (though his earnings were hardly greater than her own, and he lived, in a single back-room, in a house where she had never seen a window washed). He had, for her, the glamour of reduced gentility and fallen fortunes; she was conscious that he spoke a different language (though she could n't have said in what the difference consisted) from the other members of her humble, almost suburban circle; and the shape of his hands was distinctly aristocratic. (Miss Pynsent, as I have intimated, was immensely preoccupied with that element in life.) Mr. Vetch displeased her only by one of the facets of his character, — his blasphemous republican, radical views, and the contemptuous manner in which he expressed himself about the nobility. On that ground he distressed her extremely, though he never seemed to her so clever as when he horrified her most. These dreadful theories (expressed so brilliantly that, really, they might have been dangerous, if Miss Pynsent had not known her own place so well) constituted no presumption against his refined origin; they were explained, rather, to a certain extent, by a just resentment at finding himself excluded from his proper place. Mr. Vetch was short, fat, and bald, though he was not much older than Miss Pynsent, who was not much older than some people who called themselves forty-five; he always went to the theatre in evening-dress, with a flower in his button-hole, and wore a glass in one eye. He looked mild and smooth, and as if he would fidget at the most about the "get up" of his linen; you would have thought him finical but superficial, and never have suspected that he was a revolutionist, or even a critic of life. Sometimes, when he could get away from the theatre early enough, he went with a pianist, a friend of his, to play dance-music at small parties; and after such expeditions he was particu-

larly cynical and startling; he indulged in diatribes against the British middle-class, its Philistinism, its snobbery. He seldom had much conversation with Miss Pynsent without telling her that she had the intellectual outlook of a caterpillar; but this was his privilege after a friendship now of seven years' standing, which had begun (the year after he came to live in Lomax Place) with her going over to nurse him, on learning from the milkwoman that he was alone at Number 17, — laid up with an attack of gastritis. He always compared her to an insect or a bird, and she did n't mind, because she knew he liked her, and she herself liked all winged creatures. How indeed could she complain, after hearing him call the Queen a superannuated form, and the Archbishop of Canterbury a grotesque superstition?

He laid his violin-case on the table, which was covered with a confusion of fashion-plates and pincushions, and glanced toward the fire, where a kettle was gently hissing. Miss Pynsent, who had put it on half an hour before, read his glance, and reflected with complacency that Mrs. Bowerbank had not absolutely drained the little bottle in the chiffonier. She put it on the table again, this time with a single glass, and told her visitor that, as a great exception, he might light his pipe. In fact, she always made the exception, and he always replied to the gracious speech by inquiring whether she supposed the greengrocers' wives, the butchers' daughters, for whom she worked, had fine enough noses to smell, in the garments she sent home, the fumes of his tobacco. He knew her "connection" was confined to small shopkeepers, but she did n't wish others to know it, and would have liked them to believe it was important that the poor little stuffs she made up (into very queer fashions, I am afraid) should not surprise the feminine nostril. But it had always been im-



possible to impose on Mr. Vetch; he guessed the truth, the untrimmed truth, about everything, in a moment. She was sure he would do so now, in regard to this solemn question which had come up about Hyacinth; he would see that though she was agreeably flurried at finding herself whirled in the last eddies of a case that had been so celebrated in its day, her secret wish was to shirk her duty (if it *was* a duty); to keep the child from ever knowing his mother's unmentionable history, the shame that attached to his origin, the opportunity she had had of letting him see the wretched woman before she died. She knew Mr. Vetch would read her troubled thoughts, but she hoped he would say they were natural and just: she reflected that as he took an interest in Hyacinth he would n't want him to be subjected to a mortification that might rankle forever and perhaps even crush him to the earth. She related Mrs. Bowerbank's visit, while he sat upon the sofa, in the very place where that majestic woman had reposed, and puffed his smoke-wreaths into the dusky little room. He knew the story of the child's birth, had known it years before, so she had no startling revelation to make. He was not in the least agitated at learning that Florentine was dying in prison, and had managed to get a message conveyed to Amanda; he thought this so much in the usual course that he said to Miss Pynsent, "Did you expect her to live on there forever, working out her terrible sentence, just to spare you the annoyance of a dilemma, or any reminder of her miserable existence, which you have preferred to forget?" That was just the sort of question Mr. Vetch was sure to ask, and he inquired, further, of his dismayed hostess, whether she was sure her friend's message (he called the unhappy creature her friend) had come to her in the regular way. The warders, surely, had no authority to introduce visitors to their captives;

and was it a question of her going off to the prison on the sole authority of Mrs. Bowerbank? The little dressmaker explained that this lady had merely come to sound her, Florentine had begged so hard. She had been in Mrs. Bowerbank's ward before her removal to the infirmary, where she now lay, ebbing away, and she had communicated her desire to the Catholic chaplain, who had undertaken that some satisfaction — of inquiry, at least — should be given her. He had thought it best to ascertain first whether the person in charge of the child would be willing to bring him, such a course being perfectly optional, and he had some talk with Mrs. Bowerbank on the subject, in which it was agreed between them that if she would approach Miss Pynsent and explain to her the situation, leaving her to do what she thought best, he would answer for it that the consent of the governor of the prison should be given to the interview. Miss Pynsent had lived for fourteen years in Lomax Place, and Florentine had never forgotten that this was her address at the time she came to her at Newgate (before her dreadful sentence had been commuted), and promised, in an outgush of pity for one whom she had known in the days of her honesty and brightness, that she would save the child, keep it from the workhouse and the streets, keep it from the fate that had clutched the mother. Mrs. Bowerbank had a half-holiday, and a sister living also in the north of London, to whom she had been for some time intending a visit; so that after her domestic duty had been performed, it had been possible for her to drop in on Miss Pynsent in a kind of natural, casual way, and put the case before her. It would be just as she might be disposed to view it. She was to think it over a day or two, but not long, because the woman was so ill, and then write to Mrs. Bowerbank, at the prison. If she should consent, Mrs. Bowerbank would tell the

chaplain, and the chaplain would obtain the order from the governor and send it to Lomax Place; after which Amanda would immediately set out with her unconscious victim. But should she — *must* she — consent? That was the terrible, the heart-shaking question, with which Miss Pynsent's unaided wisdom had been unable to grapple.

"After all, he is n't hers any more, — he's mine, mine only and mine always. I should like to know if all I have done for him does n't make him so!" It was in this manner that Amanda Pynsent delivered herself, while she plied her needle, faster than ever, in a piece of stuff that was pinned to her knee.

Mr. Vetch watched her awhile, blowing silently at his pipe, with his head thrown back on the high, stiff, old-fashioned sofa, and his little legs crossed under him like a Turk's. "It's true you have done a good deal for him. You are a good little woman, my dear Pinnie, after all." He said "after all," because that was a part of his tone. In reality he had never had a moment's doubt that she was the best little woman in the north of London.

"I have done what I could, and I don't want no fuss made about it. Only it does make a difference when you come to look at it — about taking him off to see another woman. And *such* another woman — and in *such* a place! I think it's hardly right to take an innocent child."

"I don't know about that; there are people that would tell you it would do him good. If he did n't like the place as a child, he would take more care to keep out of it later."

"Lord, Mr. Vetch, how can you think? And him such a perfect little gentleman!" Miss Pynsent cried.

"Is it you that have made him one?" the fiddler asked. "It does n't run in the family, you'd say."

"Family? what do you know about

that?" she replied, quickly, catching at her dearest, her only hobby.

"Yes, indeed, what does any one know? what did she know herself?" And then Miss Pynsent's visitor added, irrelevantly, "Why should you have taken him on your back? Why did you want to be so good? No one else thinks it necessary."

"I did n't want to be good. That is, I do want to, of course, in a general way: but that was n't the reason then. But I had nothing of my own, — I had nothing in the world but my thimble."

"That would have seemed to most people a reason for not adopting a prostitute's bastard."

"Well, I went to see him at the place where he was (just where she had left him, with the woman of the house), and I saw what kind of a shop *that* was, and felt it was a shame an innocent child should grow up in such a place." Miss Pynsent defended herself as earnestly as if her inconsistency had been of a criminal cast. "And he would n't have grown up, neither. *They* would n't have troubled themselves long with a helpless baby. *They'd* have played some trick on him, if it was only to send him to the workhouse. Besides, I always was fond of small creatures, and I have been fond of this one," she went on, speaking as if with a consciousness, on her own part, of almost heroic proportions.

"He was in my way the first two or three years, and it was a good deal of a pull to look after the business and him together. But now he's like the business — he seems to go of himself."

"Oh, if he flourishes as the business flourishes, you can just enjoy your peace of mind," said the fiddler, still with his manner of making a small dry joke of everything.

"That's all very well, but it does n't close my eyes to that poor woman lying there and moaning just for the touch of his little 'and before she passes away.

Mrs. Bowerbank says she believes I will bring him."

"Who believes? Mrs. Bowerbank?"

"I wonder if there's anything in life fearful enough for you to take it seriously," Miss Pynsent rejoined, snapping off a thread, with temper. "The day you stop laughing I should like to be there."

"So long as you are there, I shall never stop. What is it you want me to advise you? to take the child, or to leave the mother to groan herself out?"

"I want you to tell me whether he'll curse me when he grows older."

"That depends upon what you do. However, he will probably do it in either case."

"You don't believe that, because you like him," said Amanda, with acuteness.

"Precisely; and he'll curse me too. He'll curse every one. He won't be happy."

"I don't know how you think I bring him up," the little dressmaker remarked, with dignity.

"You don't bring him up; he brings you up."

"That's what you have always said; but you don't know. If you mean that he does as he likes, then he ought to be happy. It ain't kind of you to say he won't be," Miss Pynsent added, reproachfully.

"I would say anything you like, if what I say would help the matter. He's a thin-skinned, morbid, mooning little beggar, with a good deal of imagination and not much perseverance, who will expect a good deal more of life than he will find in it. That's why he won't be happy."

Miss Pynsent listened to this description of her *protégé* with an appearance of criticising it mentally; but in reality she did n't know what "morbid" meant, and did n't like to ask. "He's the cleverest person I know, except yourself," she said in a moment, for Mr. Vetch's words had been in the key of what she thought most remarkable in him. What

that was she would have been unable to say.

"Thank you very much for putting me first," the fiddler rejoined, after a series of puffs. "The youngster's interesting, one sees that he has a mind, and in that respect he is—I won't say unique, but peculiar. I shall watch him with curiosity, to see what he grows into. But I shall always be glad that I'm a selfish brute of a bachelor; that I never invested in that class of goods."

"Well, you *are* comforting. You would spoil him more than I do," said Amanda.

"Possibly, but it would be in a different way. I would n't tell him every three minutes that his father was a duke."

"A duke I never mentioned!" the little dressmaker cried, with eagerness. "I never specified any rank, nor said a word about any one in particular. I never so much as insinuated the name of his lordship. But I *may* have said that if the truth was to be found out, he might be proved to be connected—in the way of cousinship, or something of the kind,—with the highest in the land. I should have thought myself wanting if I had n't given him a glimpse of that. But there is one thing I have always added—that the truth never *is* found out."

"You are still more comforting than I!" Mr. Vetch exclaimed. He continued to watch her, with his charitable, round-faced smile, and then he said, "You won't do what I say; so what is the use of my telling you?"

"I assure you I will, if you say you believe it's the *only* right."

"Do I often say anything so asinine? Right—right? what have you to do with that? If you want the *only* right, you are very particular."

"Please, then, what am I to go by?" the dressmaker asked, bewildered.

"You are to go by this, by what will take the youngster down."

"Take him down, my poor little pet?"

"Your poor little pet thinks himself the flower of creation. I don't say there is any harm in that: a fine, blooming, odoriferous conceit is a natural appendage of youth and cleverness. I don't say there is any great harm in it, but if you want a guide as to how you are to treat a boy, that's as good a guide as any other."

"You want me to arrange the interview, then?"

"I don't want you to do anything, but give me another sip of brandy. I just say this: that I think it's a great gain, early in life, to know the worst; then we don't live in a fool's paradise. I did that till I was nearly forty; then I woke up and found I was in Lomax Place." Whenever Mr. Vetch said anything that could be construed as a reference to a former position which had had elements of distinction, Miss Pynsent observed a discreet, a respectful silence, and that is why she did not challenge him now, though she wanted very much to say that Hyacinth was no more "presumptuous" (that was the term she should have used) than he had reason to be, with his genteel figure and his wonderful intelligence; and that as for thinking himself a "flower" of any kind, he knew but too well that he lived in a small black-faced house, miles away from the West End, rented by a poor little woman who took lodgers, and who, as they were of such a class that they were not always to be depended upon to settle her weekly account, had a strain to make two ends meet, in spite of the sign between her windows —

MISS AMANDA PYNSENT.

MODES ET ROBES.

DRESSMAKING IN ALL ITS BRANCHES. COURT-DRESSES, MANTLES, AND FASHIONABLE BONNETS.

Singularly enough, her companion, before she had permitted herself to interpose, took up her own thought (in

one of its parts), and remarked that perhaps she would say of the child that he was, so far as his actual circumstances were concerned, low enough down in the world, without one's wanting him to be any lower. "But by the time he's twenty, he'll persuade himself that Lomax Place was a bad dream, that your lodgers and your dressmaking were as imaginary as they are vulgar, and that when an old friend came to see you late at night, it was not your amiable practice to make him a glass of brandy and water. He'll teach himself to forget all this: he'll have a way."

"Do you mean he'll forget *me*, he'll deny me?" cried Miss Pynsent, stopping the movement of her needle, short off, for the first time.

"As the person designated in that attractive blazonry on the outside of your house, decidedly he will; and me, equally, as a bald-headed, pot-bellied fiddler, who regarded you as the most graceful and refined of his acquaintance. I don't mean he'll disown you and pretend he never knew you: I don't think he will ever be such an odious little cad as that; he probably won't be a sneak, and he strikes me as having some love, and possibly even some gratitude, in him. But he will, in his imagination (and that will always persuade him), subject you to some extraordinary metamorphosis; he will dress you up."

"He'll dress me up!" Amanda ejaculated, quite ceasing to follow the train of Mr. Vetch's demonstration. "Do you mean that he'll have the property — that his relations will take him up?"

"My dear, delightful, idiotic Pinnie, I am speaking in a figurative manner. I don't pretend to say what his precise position will be when we are relegated; but I affirm that relegation will be our fate. Therefore don't stuff him with any more illusions than are necessary to keep him alive; he will be sure to pick up enough on the way. On the contrary,

give him a good stiff dose of the truth at the start."

"Dear me, dear me, of course you see much further into it than I could ever do," Pinnie murmured, as she threaded a needle.

Mr. Vetch paused a minute, but apparently not out of deference to this amiable interruption. He went on suddenly, with a ring of feeling in his voice. "Let him know, because it will be useful to him later, the state of the account between society and himself; he can then conduct himself accordingly. If he is the illegitimate child of a French good-for-naught who murdered one of her numerous lovers, don't shuffle out of sight so important a fact. I regard that as a most valuable origin."

"Lord, Mr. Vetch, how you talk!" cried Miss Pynsent, staring. "I don't know what one would think, to hear you."

"Surely, my dear lady, and for this reason: that those are the people with whom society has to count. It has n't with you and me." Miss Pynsent gave a sigh which might have meant either that she was well aware of that, or that Mr. Vetch had a terrible way of enlarging a subject, especially when it was already too big for her; and her philosophic visitor went on: "Poor little devil, let him see her, let him see her."

"And if later, when he's twenty, he says to me that if I had n't meddled in it he need never have known, he need never have had that shame, pray what am I to say to him then? That's what I can't get out my head."

"You can say to him that a young man who is sorry for having gone to his mother when, in her last hours, she lay groaning for him on a pallet in a penitentiary, deserves more than the sharpest pang he can possibly feel." And the little fiddler, getting up, went over to the fireplace and shook out the ashes of his pipe.

"Well, I am sure it's natural he

should feel badly," said Miss Pynsent, folding up her work with the same desperate quickness that had animated her throughout the evening.

"I have n't the least objection to his feeling badly: that's not the worst thing in the world! If a few more people felt badly in this sodden, stolid, stupid race of ours, the world would wake up to an idea or two, and we should see the beginning of the dance. It's the dull acceptance, the absence of reflection, the impenetrable density." Here Mr. Vetch stopped short; his hostess stood before him with eyes of entreaty, with clasped hands.

"Now, Theophilus Vetch, don't go off into them dreadful wild theories," she cried, always ungrammatical when she was strongly moved. "You always fly away over the housetops. I thought you liked him better — the dear little unfortunate."

Theophilus Vetch had pocketed his pipe; he put on his hat with the freedom of old acquaintance and of Lomax Place, and took up his small, coffin-like fiddle-case. "My good Pinnie, I don't think you understand a word I say. It's no use talking — do as you like!"

"Well, I must say I don't think it was worth your coming in at midnight only to tell me that. I don't like anything — I hate the whole dreadful business!"

He bent over, in his short plumpness, to kiss her hand, as he had seen people do on the stage. "My dear friend, we have different ideas, and I never shall succeed in driving mine into your head. It's because I am fond of him, poor little devil; but you will never understand that. I want him to know everything, and especially the worst — the worst, as I have said. If I were in his position, I should n't thank you for trying to make a fool of me!"

"A fool of you? as if I thought of anything but his 'appiness!" Amanda Pynsent exclaimed. She stood looking

at him, but following her own reflections; she had given up the attempt to enter into his whims. She remembered, what she had noticed before, in other occurrences, that his reasons were always more extraordinary than his behavior itself; if you only considered his life, you would n't have thought him so fanciful. "Very likely I think too much of that," she added. "She wants him and cries for him: that's what keeps coming back to me." She took up her lamp to light Mr. Vetch to the door (for the dim luminary in the passage had long since been extinguished), and before he left the house he turned, suddenly, stopping short, and said, his placid face taking a strange expression from the quizzical glimmer of his little round eyes:—

"What does it matter after all, and why do you worry? What difference can it make what happens—on either side—to such low people?"

### III.

Mrs. Bowerbank had let her know she would meet her, almost at the threshold of the dreadful place; and this thought had sustained Miss Pynsent in her long and devious journey, performed partly on foot, partly in a succession of omnibuses. She had had ideas about a cab, but she decided to reserve the cab for the return, as then, very likely, she should be so shaken with emotion, so overpoweringly affected, that it would be a comfort to escape from observation. She had no confidence that if once she passed the door of the prison she should ever be restored to liberty and her customers; it seemed to her an adventure as dangerous as it was dismal, and she was immensely touched by the clear-faced eagerness of the child at her side, who strained forward as brightly as he had done on another occasion, still celebrated in Miss Pynsent's industrious annals, a

certain sultry Saturday in August, when she had taken him to the Tower of London. It had been a terrible question with her, when once she made up her mind, what she should tell him about the nature of their errand. She determined to tell him as little as possible, to say only that she was going to see a poor woman who was in prison on account of a crime she had committed years before, and who had sent for her, and had caused her to be told at the same time that if there was any child she could see—as children (if they were good) were bright and cheering—it would make her very happy that such a little visitor should come as well. It was very difficult, with Hyacinth, to make reservations or mysteries; he wanted to know everything about everything, and he projected the light of a hundred questions upon Miss Pynsent's incarcerated friend. She had to admit that she had been her friend (for where else was the obligation to go to see her?); but she spoke of the acquaintance as if it were of the slightest (it had survived in the memory of the prisoner only because every one else—the world was so very hard!—had turned away from her), and she congratulated herself on a happy inspiration when she represented the crime for which such a penalty had been exacted as the theft of a gold watch, in a moment of irresistible temptation. The woman had had a wicked husband, who maltreated and deserted her, and she was very poor, almost starving, dreadfully pressed. Hyacinth listened to her history with absorbed attention, and then he said:—

"And had n't she any children—had n't she a little boy?"

This inquiry seemed to Miss Pynsent a portent of future embarrassments, but she met it as bravely as she could, and replied that she believed the wretched victim of the law had had (once upon a time) a very small baby, but she was afraid she had completely lost sight of



it. He must know they did n't allow babies in prisons. To this Hyacinth rejoined that of course they would allow him, because he was — really — big. Miss Pynsent fortified herself with the memory of her other pilgrimage to Newgate, upwards of ten years before; she had escaped from that ordeal, and had even had the comfort of knowing that in its fruits the interview had been beneficent. The responsibility, however, was much greater now, and, after all, it was not on her own account she was in a nervous tremor, but on that of the urchin over whom the shadow of the house of shame might cast itself.

They made the last part of their approach on foot, having got themselves deposited as near as possible to the river, and keeping beside it (according to advice elicited by Miss Pynsent, on the way, in a dozen confidential interviews with policemen, conductors of omnibuses, and small shopkeepers), till they came to a big, dark building with towers, which they would know as soon as they looked at it. They knew it, in fact, soon enough, when they saw it lift its dusky mass from the bank of the Thames, lying there and sprawling over the whole neighborhood, with brown, bare, windowless walls, ugly, truncated pinnacles, and a character unspeakably sad and stern. It looked very sinister and wicked, to Miss Pynsent's eyes, and she wondered why a prison should have such an evil face, if it was erected in the interest of justice and order — an expression of the righteous forces of society. This particular penitentiary struck her as about as bad and wrong as those who were in it; it threw a blight over the whole place and made the river look foul and poisonous, and the opposite bank, with its protrusions of long-necked chimneys, unsightly gasometers, and deposits of rubbish, wear the aspect of a region at whose expense the jail had been populated. She looked up at the dull, closed gates of the place,

tightening her grasp of Hyacinth's small hand; and if it was hard to believe anything so blind and deaf and closely fastened would relax itself to let her in, there was a dreadful premonitory sinking of the heart attached to the idea of its taking the same trouble to let her out. As she hung back, murmuring vague ejaculations, at the very goal of her journey, an incident occurred which fanned all her scruples and reluctances into life again. The child suddenly jerked his hand out of her own, and placing it behind him, in the clutch of the other, said to her, respectfully but resolutely, while he planted himself at a considerable distance: —

"I don't like this place."

"Neither do I like it, my darling," cried the dressmaker, pitifully. "Oh, if you knew how little!"

"Then we will go away. I won't go in."

She would have embraced this proposition with alacrity, if it had not become very vivid to her while she stood there, in the midst of her shrinking, that behind those sullen walls the mother who bore him was even then counting the minutes. She was alive, in that huge, dull tomb, and it seemed to Miss Pynsent that they had already entered into relation with her. They were near her, and she knew it; in a few minutes she would taste the cup of the only mercy (except the reprieve from hanging!) she had known since her fall. A few, a very few minutes would do it, and it seemed to Miss Pynsent that if she should fail of her charity now, the watches of the night, in Lomax Place, would be haunted with remorse and perhaps even with something worse. There was something inside that waited and listened, something that would break, with an awful sound, a shriek, or a curse, if she were to lead the boy away. She looked into his pale face for a moment, perfectly conscious that it would be vain for her to take the tone of command; besides, that would

have seemed to her shocking. She had another inspiration, and she said to him in a manner in which she had had occasion to speak before :—

"The reason why we have come is only to be kind. If we are kind we shan't mind its being disagreeable."

"Why should we be kind, if she's a bad woman?" Hyacinth inquired. "She must be very low; I don't want to know her."

"Hush, hush," groaned poor Amanda, edging toward him with clasped hands. "She is not bad now; it has all been washed away—it has been expiated."

"What's expiated?" asked the child, while she almost kneeled down in the dust, catching him to her bosom.

"It's when you have suffered terribly—suffered so much that it has made you good again."

"Has *she* suffered very much?"

"For years and years. And now she is dying. It proves she is very good now, that she should want to see us."

"Do you mean because *we* are good?" Hyacinth went on, probing the matter in a way that made his companion quiver, and gazing away from her, very seriously, across the river, at the dreary waste of Battersea.

"We shall be good if we are pitiful, if we make an effort," said the dressmaker, seeming to look up at him rather than down.

"But if she is dying? I don't want to see any one die."

Miss Pynsent was bewildered, but she rejoined, desperately, "If we go to her, perhaps she won't. Maybe we shall save her."

He transferred his remarkable little eyes—eyes which always appeared to her to belong to a person older than herself, to her face; and then he inquired, "Why should I save her, if I don't like her?"

"If she likes you, that will be enough."

At this Miss Pynsent began to see

that he was moved. "Will she like me very much?"

"More, much more than any one."

"More than you, now?"

"Oh," said Amanda quickly. "I mean more than she likes any one."

Hyacinth had slipped his hands into the pockets of his scanty knickerbockers, and, with his legs slightly apart, he looked from his companion back to the immense dreary jail. A great deal, to Miss Pynsent's sense, depended on that moment. "Oh, well," he said, at last, "I'll just step in."

"Deary, deary!" the dressmaker murmured to herself, as they crossed the bare semicircle which separated the gateway from the unfrequented street. She exerted herself to pull the bell, which seemed to her terribly big and stiff, and while she waited, again, for the consequences of this effort, the boy broke out, abruptly :—

"How can she like me so much if she does n't know me?"

Miss Pynsent wished the gate would open before an answer to this question should become imperative, but the people within were a long time coming, and their delay gave Hyacinth an opportunity to repeat it. So the dressmaker rejoined, seizing the first pretext that came into her head, "It's because the little baby she had, of old, was also named Hyacinth."

"That's a queer reason," the boy murmured, staring across again at the Battersea shore.

A moment afterwards they found themselves in a vast interior dimness, with a grinding of keys and bolts going on behind them. Hereupon Miss Pynsent gave herself up to an overruling Providence, and she remembered, later, no circumstance of what happened to her until the great person of Mrs. Bowerbank loomed before her in the narrowness of a strange, dark corridor. She only had a confused impression of being surrounded with high black walls, whose

inner face was more dreadful than the other, the one that overlooked the river; of passing through gray, stony courts, in some of which dreadful figures, scarcely female, in hideous brown, misfitting uniforms and perfect frights of hoods, were marching round in a circle; of squeezing up steep, unlighted staircases at the heels of a woman who had taken possession of her at the first stage, and who made incomprehensible remarks to other women, of lumpish aspect, as she saw them erect themselves, suddenly and spectrally, with dowdy untied bonnets, in uncanny corners and recesses of the draughty labyrinth. If the place had seemed cruel to the poor little dressmaker outside, it may be believed that it did not strike her as an abode of mercy while she pursued her devious way into the circular shafts of cells, where she had an opportunity of looking at captives through grated peepholes, and of edging past others who had temporarily been turned into the corridors — silent women, with fixed eyes, who flattened themselves against the stone walls at the brush of the visitor's dress, and whom Miss Pynsent was afraid to glance at. She never had felt so immured, so made sure of; there were walls within walls and galleries on top of galleries; even the daylight lost its color, and you could n't imagine what o'clock it was. Mrs. Bowerbank appeared to have failed her, and that made her feel worse; a panic seized her, as she went, in regard to the child. On him, too, the horror of the place would have fallen, and she had a sickening prevision that he would have convulsions after they got home. It was a most improper place to have brought him, no matter who had sent for him, and no matter who was dying. The stillness would terrify him, she was sure — the penitential dumbness of the clustered or isolated women. She clasped his hand more tightly, and she felt him keep close to her, without speaking a word. At last, in an open doorway,

darkened by her ample person, Mrs. Bowerbank revealed herself, and Miss Pynsent thought it (afterwards) a sign of her place and power that she should not condescend to apologize for not having appeared till that moment, or to explain why she had not met the bewildered pilgrims near the principal entrance, according to her promise. Miss Pynsent could not embrace the state of mind of people who did n't apologize, though she vaguely envied and admired it, she herself spending much of her time in making excuses for obnoxious acts she had not committed. Mrs. Bowerbank, however, was not arrogant, she was only massive and muscular; and after she had taken her timorous friends in tow, the dressmaker was able to comfort herself with the reflection that even so masterful a woman could n't inflict anything gratuitously disagreeable on a person who had made her visit in Lomax Place pass off so pleasantly.

It was on the outskirts of the infirmary that she had been hovering, and it was into certain dismal chambers, dedicated to sick criminals, that she presently ushered her companions. These chambers were naked and grated, like all the rest of the place, and caused Miss Pynsent to say to herself that it must be a blessing to be ill in such a place, because you could n't possibly pick up again, and then your case was simple. Such simplification, however, had for the moment been offered to very few of Florentine's fellow-sufferers, for only three of the small, stiff beds were occupied — occupied by white-faced women in tight, sordid caps, on whom, in the stale, ugly room, the sallow light itself seemed to rest without pity. Mrs. Bowerbank discreetly paid no attention whatever to Hyacinth; she only said to Miss Pynsent, with her hoarse distinctness, "You'll find her very low; she would n't have waited another day." And she guided them, through a still further door, to the smallest room of

all, where there were but three beds, placed in a row. Miss Pynsent's frightened eyes rather faltered than inquired, but she became aware that a woman was lying on the middle bed, and that her face was turned toward the door. Mrs. Bowerbank led the way straight up to her, and, giving a business-like pat to her pillow, looked invitation and encouragement to the visitors, who clung together not far within the threshold. Their conductress reminded them that very few minutes were allowed them, and that they had better not dawdle them away; whereupon, as the boy still hung back, the little dressmaker advanced alone, looking at the sick woman with what courage she could muster. It seemed to her that she was approaching a perfect stranger, so completely had nine years of prison transformed Florentine. She felt, immediately, that it was a mercy she had n't told Hyacinth she was pretty (as she used to be), for there was no beauty left in the hollow, bloodless mask that presented itself without a movement. She *had* told him that the poor woman was good, but she did n't look so, nor, evidently, was he struck with it as he stared back at her across the interval he declined to traverse, kept (at the same time) from retreating by her strange, fixed eyes, the only portion of all her wasted person in which there was still any appearance of life. She looked unnatural to Amanda Pynsent, and terribly old; a speechless, motionless creature, dazed and stupid, whereas Florentine Vivier, in the obliterated past, had been her ideal of personal, as distinguished from social, brilliancy. Above all she seemed disfigured and ugly, cruelly misrepresented by her coarse cap and short, rough hair. Amanda, as she stood beside her, thought with a sort of scared elation that Hyacinth would never guess that a person in whom there was so little trace of smartness

— or of cleverness of any kind — was his mother. At the very most it might occur to him, as Mrs. Bowerbank had suggested, that she was his grandmother. Mrs. Bowerbank seated herself on the further bed, with folded hands, like a monumental timekeeper, and remarked, in the manner of one speaking from a sense of duty, that the poor thing would n't get much good of the child, unless he showed more confidence. This observation was evidently lost upon the boy; he was too intensely absorbed in watching the prisoner. A chair had been placed at the head of her bed, and Miss Pynsent sat down without her appearing to notice it. In a moment, however, she lifted her hand a little, pushing it out from under the coverlet, and the dressmaker laid her own hand softly upon it. This gesture elicited no response, but after a little, still gazing at the boy, Florentine murmured, in words no one present was in a position to understand: —

*"Dieu de Dieu, qu'il est beau!"*

"She won't speak nothing but French since she has been so bad — you can't get a natural word out of her," Mrs. Bowerbank said.

"It used to be so pretty when she spoke English — and so very amusing," Miss Pynsent ventured to announce, with a feeble attempt to brighten up the scene. "I suppose she has forgotten it all."

"She may well have forgotten it — she never gave her tongue much exercise. There was little enough trouble to keep *her* from chattering," Mrs. Bowerbank rejoined, giving a twitch to the sick woman's counterpane. Miss Pynsent settled it a little on the other side, and considered, in the same train, that this separation of language was indeed a mercy; for how could it ever come into her small companion's head that he was the offspring of a person who could n't so much as say good-morning to him? She felt, at the same

time, that the scene might have been somewhat less painful if they had been able to communicate with the object of their compassion. As it was, they had too much the air of having been brought together simply to look at each other, and there was a grewsome awkwardness in that, considering the delicacy of Florentine's position. Not, indeed, that she looked much at her old comrade; it was as if she were conscious of Miss Pynsent's being there, and would have been glad to thank her for it—glad even to examine her for her own sake, and see what change, for her, too, the horrible years had brought, but felt, more than this, that she had but the thinnest pulse of energy left, and that not a moment that could still be of use to her was too much to take in her child. She took him in with all the glazed entreaty of her eyes, quite giving up his poor little protectress, who evidently would have to take her gratitude for granted. Hyacinth, on his side, after some moments of embarrassing silence—there was nothing audible but Mrs. Bowerbank's breathing—had satisfied himself, and he turned about to look for a place of patience, while Miss Pynsent should finish her business, which as yet made so little show. He appeared to wish, not to leave the room altogether, as that would be a confession of a vanquished spirit, but to take some attitude that should express his complete disapproval of the unpleasant situation. He was not in sympathy, and he could not have made it more clear than by the way he presently went and placed himself on a low stool, in a corner, near the door by which they had entered.

"*Est-il possible, mon Dieu, qu'il soit gentil comme ça?*" his mother moaned, just above her breath.

"We are very glad you should have cared—that they look after you so well," said Miss Pynsent, confusedly, at random; feeling, first, that Hy-

acinth's coldness was, perhaps, excessive, and his skepticism too marked, and then that allusions to the way the poor woman was looked after were not exactly happy. They did n't matter, however, for she evidently heard nothing, giving no sign of interest, even when Mrs. Bowerbank, in a tone between a desire to make the interview more lively, and an idea of showing that she knew how to treat the young, referred herself to the little boy.

"Is there nothing the little gentleman would like to say, now, to the unfortunate? Has n't he any pleasant remark to make to her about his coming so far to see her when she's so sunk? It is n't often that children are shown over the place (as the little man has been), and there's many that would think they were lucky if they could see what he has seen."

"*Mon pauvre joujou, mon pauvre chéri,*" the prisoner went on, in her tender, tragic whisper.

"He only wants to be very good; he always sits that way at home," said Miss Pynsent, alarmed at Mrs. Bowerbank's address and hoping there would n't be a scene.

"He might have stayed at home then—with this wretched person moaning after him," Mrs. Bowerbank remarked, with some sternness. She plainly felt that the occasion threatened to be wanting in brilliancy, and wished to intimate that though she was to be trusted for discipline, she thought they were all getting off too easily.

"I came because Pinnie brought me," Hyacinth declared, from his low perch. "I thought at first it would be pleasant. But it ain't pleasant. I don't like prisons." And he placed his little feet on the cross-piece of the stool, as if to touch the institution at as few points as possible.

The woman in bed continued her strange, almost whining plaint. "*Il ne veut pas s'approcher; il a honte de moi.*"

"There's a many that begin like that!" laughed Mrs. Bowerbank, who was irritated by the boy's contempt for one of her Majesty's finest establishments.

Hyacinth's little white face exhibited no confusion; he only turned it to the prisoner again, and Miss Pynsent felt that some extraordinary, dumb exchange of meanings was taking place between them. "She used to be so elegant; she was a fine woman," she observed, gently and helplessly.

"*Il a honte de moi — il a honte, Dieu le pardonne,*" Florentine Vivier went on, never moving her eyes.

"She's asking for something, in her language. I used to know a few words," said Miss Pynsent, stroking down the bed, very nervously.

"Who is that woman? what does she want?" Hyacinth asked, his small, clear voice ringing over the dreary room.

"She wants you to come near her, she wants to kiss you, sir," said Mrs. Bowerbank, as if it were more than he deserved.

"I won't kiss her; Pinnie says she stole a watch!" the child answered, with resolution.

"Oh, you dreadful — how could you ever!" cried Pinnie, blushing all over and starting out of her chair.

It was partly Amanda's agitation, perhaps, which, by the jolt it administered, gave an impulse to the sick woman, and partly the penetrating and expressive tone in which Hyacinth announced his repugnance: at any rate, Florentine, in the most unexpected and violent manner, jerked herself up from her pillow, and, with dilated eyes and waving hands, shrieked out, "*Ah, quelle infamie!* I never stole a watch, I never stole anything — anything! *Ah, par exemple!*" Then she fell back, sobbing with the passion that had given her a moment's strength.

"I'm sure you need n't put more on her than she has by rights," said Mrs.

Bowerbank, with dignity, to the dress-maker, laying a large red hand upon the patient, to keep her in her place.

"Mercy, more? I thought it so much less!" cried Miss Pynsent, convulsed with confusion and jerking herself, in a wild tremor, from the mother to the child, as if she wished to fling herself upon one for contrition and upon the other for revenge.

"*Il a honte de moi — il a honte de moi!*" Florentine repeated, in the misery of her sobs, "*Dieu de bonté, quelle horreur!*"

Miss Pynsent dropped on her knees beside the bed, and trying to possess herself of Florentine's hand again, protested with a passion almost equal to that of the prisoner (she felt that her nerves had been screwed up to the snapping-point, and now they were all in shreds) that she had n't meant what she had told the child, that he had n't understood, that Florentine herself had n't understood, that she had only said she had been accused and meant that no one had ever believed it. The Frenchwoman paid no attention to her whatever, and Amanda buried her face and her embarrassment in the side of the hard little prison-bed, while, above the sound of their common lamentation, she heard the judicial tones of Mrs. Bowerbank.

"The child is delicate, you might well say! I'm disappointed in the effect — I was in hopes you'd hearten her up. The doctor'll be down on me, of course; so we'll just pass out again."

"I'm very sorry I made you cry. And you must excuse Pinnie — I asked her so many questions."

These words came from close beside the prostrate dressmaker, who, lifting herself quickly, found the little boy had advanced to her elbow and was taking a nearer view of the mysterious captive. They produced upon the latter an effect even more powerful than his unfortunate speech of a moment before; for she found strength to raise herself,



partly, in her bed again, and to hold out her arms to him, with the same thrilling sobs. She was talking still, but she had become quite inarticulate, and Miss Pynsent had but a glimpse of her white, ravaged face, with the hollows of its eyes and the rude crop of her hair. Amanda caught the child with an eagerness almost as great as Florentine's, and, drawing him to the head of the bed, pushed him into his mother's arms. "Kiss her—kiss her, and we'll go home!" she whispered desperately, while they closed about him, and the poor dishonored head pressed itself against his little cheek. It was a terrible, tremendous embrace, to which Hyacinth submitted with instant patience. Mrs. Bowerbank had tried at first to keep her *protégée* from rising, evidently wishing to abbreviate the scene; then, as the child was enfolded, she accepted the situation and gave judicious support from behind, with an eye to clearing the room as soon as this effort should

have spent itself. She propped up her patient with a vigorous arm: Miss Pynsent rose from her knees and turned away, and there was a minute's stillness, during which the boy accommodated himself as he might to his strange ordeal. What thoughts were begotten at that moment in his wondering little mind Miss Pynsent was destined to learn at another time. Before she had faced round to the bed again she was swept out of the room by Mrs. Bowerbank, who had lowered the prisoner, exhausted, with closed eyes, to her pillow, and given Hyacinth a business-like little push, which sent him on in advance. Miss Pynsent went home in a cab—she was so shaken; though she reflected, very nervously, on getting into it, on the opportunities it would give Hyacinth for the exercise of inquisitorial rights. To her surprise, however, he completely neglected them; he sat in silence, looking out of the window, till they reëntered Lomax Place.

Henry James.

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### THE LAUREATE OF DEATH.

IN the year 1798, at Recanati, a little mountain town of Tuscany, was born, noble and miserable, the poet Giacomo Leopardi, who began even in childhood to suffer the malice of that strange conspiracy of ills which consumed him. His constitution was very fragile, and it early felt the effect of the passionate ardor with which the sickly boy dedicated his life to literature. From the first he seems to have had little or no direction in his studies, and hardly any instruction. He literally lived among his books, rarely leaving his own room except to pass into his father's library; his research and erudition were marvelous, and at the age of sixteen he presented his father a

Latin translation and comment on Plotinus, of which Sainte-Beuve said that "one who had studied Plotinus his whole life could find something useful in this work of a boy." At that age Leopardi already knew all Greek and Latin literature; he knew French, Spanish, and English; he knew Hebrew, and disputed in that tongue with the Rabbis of Ancona.

The poet's father was Count Monaldo Leopardi, who had written little books of a religious and political character; the religion very bigoted, the politics very reactionary. His library was the largest anywhere in that region, but he seems not to have learned wisdom in it, and, though otherwise a blameless man,

he used his son, who grew to manhood differing from him in all his opinions, with a rigor that was scarcely less than cruel. He was bitterly opposed to what was called progress, to religious and civil liberty; he was devoted to what was called order, which meant merely the existing order of things, the divinely appointed prince, the infallible priest. He had a mediæval taste, and he made his palace at Recanati as much like a feudal castle as he could, with all sorts of baronial bricabrac. An armed vassal at his gate was out of the question, but at the door of his own chamber stood an effigy in rusty armor, bearing a tarnished halberd. He abhorred the fashions of our century, and wore those of an earlier epoch; his wife, who shared his prejudices and opinions, fantastically appareled herself to look like the portrait of some gentlewoman of as remote a date. Halls hung in damask, vast mirrors in carven frames, and stately furniture of antique form attested throughout the palace "the splendor of a race which, if its fortunes had somewhat declined, still knew how to maintain its ancient decorum."

In this home passed the youth and early manhood of a poet who no sooner began to think for himself than he began to think the things most discordant with his father's principles and ideas. He believed in neither the religion nor the politics of his race; he cherished with the desire of literary achievement that vague faith in humanity, in freedom, in the future, against which the Count Monaldo had so sternly set his face; he chafed under the restraints of his father's authority, and longed for some escape into the world. The Italians sometimes write of Leopardi's unhappiness, with passionate condemnation of his father; but neither was Count Monaldo's part an enviable one, and it was certainly not at this period that he had all the wrong in his differences with his son.

Nevertheless, it is pathetic to read how the heartsick, frail, ambitious boy, when he found some article in a newspaper that greatly pleased him, would write to the author and ask his friendship. When these journalists, who were possibly not always the wisest publicists of their time, so far responded to the young scholar's advances as to give him their personal acquaintance as well as their friendship, the old count received them with a courteous tolerance, which had no kindness in it for their progressive ideas. He lived in dread of his son's becoming involved in some of the many plots then hatching against order and religion, and he repressed with all his strength Leopardi's revolutionary tendencies, which must always have been mere matters of sentiment, and not deserving of great rigor.

He seems not so much to have loved Italy as to have hated Recanati. It is a small village high up in the Apennines, between Loreto and Macerata, and is chiefly accessible in ox-carts. Small towns everywhere are dull, and perhaps are not more deadly so in Italy than they are elsewhere, but there they have a peculiarly obscure, narrow life indoors. Outdoors there is a little lounging about the *caff  *, a little stir on holidays among the lower classes and the neighboring peasants, a great deal of gossip at all times, and hardly anything more. The local nobleman, perhaps, cultivates literature, as Leopardi's father did; there is always some *abate* mousing about in the local archives and writing pamphlets on disputed points of the local history; and there is the parish priest, to help form the polite society of the place. As if this social barrenness were not enough, Recanati was physically hurtful to Leopardi: the climate was very fickle; the harsh, damp air was cruel to his nerves. He says it seems to him a den where no good or beautiful thing ever comes; he bewails the common ignorance; in Recanati there is no love for

letters, for the humanizing arts ; nobody frequents his father's great library, nobody buys books, nobody reads the newspapers. Yet this forlorn and detestable little town has one good thing : it has a preëminently good Italian accent, better even, he thinks, than the Roman ; which would be a greater consolation to an Italian than we can well understand. Nevertheless it was not society, and it did not make his fellow-townsmen endurable to him ; he recoiled from them more and more, and the solitude in which he lived among his books filled him with a black melancholy, which he describes as a poison, corroding the life of body and soul alike. To a friend who tries to reconcile him to Recanati he writes : " It is very well to tell me that Plutarch and Alfieri loved Cheronea and Asti : they loved them, but they left them ; and so shall I love my native place when I am away from it. Now I say I hate it because I am in it. To recall the spot where one's childhood days were passed is dear and sweet ; it is a fine saying, ' Here you were born, and here Providence wills you to stay.' All very well. Say to the sick man striving to be well that he is flying in the face of Providence ; tell the poor man struggling to advance himself that he is defying heaven ; bid the Turk beware of baptism, for God has made him a Turk ! " So Leopardi wrote when he was in comparative health and able to continue his studies. But there were long periods when his ailments denied him his sole consolation of study. Then he rose late, walked listlessly about without opening his lips or looking at a book the whole day. As soon as he might, he returned to his studies ; when he must, he abandoned them again. At such a time he once wrote to a friend who understood and loved him : " I have not energy enough to conceive a single desire, not even for death ; not because I fear death, but because I cannot see any difference between that and my present life. For

the first time *ennui* not merely oppresses and wearies me, but it also agonizes and lacerates me, like a cruel pain. I am overwhelmed with a sense of the vanity of all things and the condition of men. My passions are dead, my very despair seems nonentity. As to my studies, which you urge me to continue, for the last eight months I have not known what study means : the nerves of my eyes and of my whole head are so weakened and disordered that I cannot read or listen to reading, nor can I fix my mind upon any subject."

At Recanati Leopardi suffered not merely solitude, but the contact of people whom he despised, and whose vulgarity was all the greater oppression when it showed itself in a sort of stupid compassionate tenderness for him. He had already suffered one of those disappointments which are the rule rather than the exception, and his first love had ended as first love always does, when it ends fortunately — in disappointment. He scarcely knew the object of his passion, a young girl of humble lot, whom he used to hear singing at her loom in the house opposite his father's palace. Count Monaldo promptly interfered, and not long afterward the young girl died. But the sensitive boy, and his biographers after him, made the most of this sorrow ; and doubtless it helped to render life under his father's roof yet heavier and harder to bear. Such as it was, it seems to have been the only love that Leopardi ever really felt, and the young girl's memory passed into the melancholy of his life and poetry.

But he did not summon courage to abandon Recanati before his twenty-fourth year, and then he did not go with his father's entire good-will. The count wished him to become a priest, but Leopardi shrank from the idea with horror, and there remained between him and his father not only the difference of their religious and political opinions, but an unkindness which must be remembered

against the judgment, if not the heart, of the latter. He gave his son so meagre an allowance that it scarcely kept him above want, and obliged him to labors and subjected him to cares which his frail health was not able to bear.

From Recanati, Leopardi first went to Rome; but he carried Recanati everywhere with him, and he was as solitary and as wretched in the capital of the world as in the little village of the Apennines. He despised the Romans as they deserved, upon very short acquaintance, and he declared that his duller fellow-villager had a greater share of good sense than the best of them. Their frivolity was incredible: the men moved him to rage and pity; the women, high and low, to loathing. In one of his letters to his brother Carlo, he says of Rome, as he found it: "I have spoken to you only about the women, because I am at a loss what to say to you about literature. Horrors upon horrors! The most sacred names profaned, the most absurd follies praised to the skies, the greatest spirits of the century trampled under foot, as inferior to the smallest literary man in Rome. Philosophy despised; genius, imagination, feeling, names — I do not say things, but even names — unknown and alien to these professional poets and poetesses! Antiquarianism placed at the summit of human learning, and considered invariably and universally as the only true study of man!" This was Rome in 1822. "I do not exaggerate," he writes, "because it is impossible, and I do not even say enough." One of the things that moved him to the greatest disgust in the childish and insipid society of a city where he had fondly hoped to find a response to his high thoughts was the sensation caused throughout Rome by the dress and theatrical effectiveness with which a certain prelate said mass. All Rome talked of it, cardinals and noble ladies complimented the performer as if he

were a ballet dancer, and the flattered prelate used to rehearse his part, and expatiate upon his methods of study for it to private audiences of admirers. In fact, society had then touched almost the lowest depth of degradation where society had always been corrupt and dissolute, and the reader of Massimo d'Azeglio's memoirs may learn particulars (given with shame and regret, indeed, and yet with perfect Italian frankness) which it is not necessary to repeat here.

There were, however, many foreigners living at Rome in whose company Leopardi took great pleasure. They were chiefly Germans, and first among them was Niebuhr, who says of his first meeting with the poet: "Conceive of my astonishment when I saw standing before me in the poor little chamber a mere youth, pale and shy, frail in person, and obviously in ill health, who was by far the first, in fact the only Greek philologist in Italy, the author of critical comments and observations which would have won honor for the first philologist in Germany, and yet only twenty-two years old! He had become thus profoundly learned without school, without instructor, without help, without encouragement, in his father's house. I understand, too, that he is one of the first of the rising poets of Italy. What a nobly gifted people!"

Niebuhr offered to procure him a professorship of Greek philosophy in Berlin, but Leopardi would not consent to leave his own country; and then Niebuhr unsuccessfully used his influence to get him some employment from the papal government, — compliments and good wishes it gave him, but no employment and no pay.

From Rome Leopardi went to Milan, where he earned something — very little — as editor of a comment upon Petrarch. A little later he went to Bologna, where a generous and sympathetic nobleman made him tutor in his

family; but Leopardi returned not long after to Recanati, where he probably found no greater content than he left there. Presently we find him at Pisa, and then at Florence, eking out the allowance from his father by such literary work as he could find to do. In the latter place it is somewhat dimly established that he again fell in love, though he despised the Florentine women almost as much as the Romans, for their extreme ignorance, folly, and pride. This love also was unhappy. There is no reason to believe that Leopardi, who inspired in men tender and ardent friendships, ever moved any woman to love. The Florentine ladies are darkly accused, by one of his biographers, of having laughed at the poor young pessimist, and it is very possible; but that need not make us think the worse of him, or of them either, for that matter. He is supposed to have figured the lady of his latest love under the name of *Aspasia*, in one of his poems, as he did his first love under that of *Sylvia*, in the poem so called. Doubtless the experience further embittered a life already sufficiently miserable. He left Florence, but after a brief sojourn at Rome he returned thither, where his friend Antonio Ranieri watched with a heavy heart the gradual decay of his forces, and persuaded him finally to seek the milder air of Naples. Ranieri's father was, like Leopardi's, of reactionary opinions, and the Neapolitan, dreading the effect of their discord, did not take his friend to his own house, but hired a villa at Capodimonte, where he lived four years in fraternal intimacy with Leopardi, and where the poet died, in 1837.

Ranieri has in some sort made himself the champion of Leopardi's fame. He has edited his poems, and has written a touching and beautiful sketch of his life. Their friendship, which was of the greatest tenderness, began when Leopardi sorely needed it; and

Ranieri devoted himself to the hapless poet like a lover, as if to console him for the many years in which he had known neither reverence nor love. He indulged all the eccentricities of his guest, who for a sick man had certain strange habits, often not rising till evening, dining at midnight, and going to bed at dawn. Ranieri's sister Paolina kept house for the friends, and shared all her brother's compassion for Leopardi, whose family appears to have willingly left him to the care of these friends. How far the old unkindness between him and his father continued, it is hard to say. His last letter was written to his mother in May, 1837, some two weeks before his death; he thanks her for a present of ten dollars, — one may imagine from the gift and the gratitude that he was still held in a strict and parsimonious tutelage, — and begs her prayers and his father's, for after he has seen them again, he shall not have long to live.

He did not see them again, but he continued to smile at the anxieties of his friends, who had too great reason to think that the end was much nearer than Leopardi himself supposed. On the night of the 14th of June, while they were waiting for the carriage which was to take them into the country where they intended to pass the time together and sup at daybreak, Leopardi felt so great a difficulty of breathing — he called it asthma, but it was dropsy of the heart — that he begged them to send for a doctor. The doctor on seeing the sick man took Ranieri apart, and bade him fetch a priest without delay, and while they waited the coming of the friar, Leopardi spoke now and then with them, but sank rapidly. Finally, says Ranieri, "Leopardi opened his eyes, now larger even than their wont, and looked at me more fixedly than before. 'I can't see you,' he said, with a kind of sigh. And he ceased to breathe, and his pulse and heart beat

no more; and at the same moment the Friar Felice of the barefoot order of St. Augustine entered the chamber, while I, quite beside myself, called with a loud voice on him who had been my friend, my brother, my father, and who answered me nothing, and yet seemed to gaze upon me. . . . His death was inconceivable to me; the others were dismayed and mute; there arose between the good friar and myself the most cruel and painful dispute, . . . I madly contending that my friend was still alive, and beseeching him with tears to accompany with the offices of religion the passing of that great soul. But he, touching again and again the pulse and the heart, continually answered that the spirit had taken flight. At last, a spontaneous and solemn silence fell upon all in the room; the friar knelt beside the dead, and we all followed his example. Then after long and profound meditation he prayed, and we prayed with him."

In another place Rauieri says: "The malady of Leopardi was indefinable, for having its spring in the secretest fountains of life, it was like life itself, inexplicable. The bones softened and dissolved away, refusing their frail support to the flesh that covered them. The flesh itself grew thinner and more lifeless every day, for the organs of nutrition denied their office of assimilation. The lungs, cramped into a space too narrow, and not sound themselves, expanded with difficulty. With difficulty the heart freed itself from the lymph with which a slow absorption burdened it. The blood, which ill renewed itself in the hard and painful respiration, returned cold, pale, and sluggish to the enfeebled veins. And in fine, the whole mysterious circle of life, moving with such great effort, seemed from moment to moment about to pause forever. Perhaps the great cerebral sponge, beginning and end of that mysterious circle, had prepotently sucked up all

the vital forces, and itself consumed in a brief time all that was meant to suffice the whole system for a long period. However it may be, the life of Leopardi was not a course, as in most men, but truly a precipitation towards death."

Some years before he died, Leopardi had a presentiment of his death, and his end was perhaps hastened by the nervous shock of the terror produced by the cholera, which was then raging in Naples. At that time the body of a Neapolitan minister of state who had died of cholera was cast into the common burial pit at Naples, — such was the fear of contagion, and so rapidly were the dead hurried to the grave. A heavy bribe secured the remains of Leopardi from this fate, and his dust now reposes in a little church on the road to Pozzuoli.

"In the years of boyhood," says the Neapolitan critic, Francesco de Sanctis, "Leopardi saw his youth vanish forever; he lived obscure, and achieved posthumous envy and renown; he was rich and noble, and he suffered from want and despite; no woman's love ever smiled upon him, the solitary lover of his own mind, to which he gave the names of Sylvia, Aspasia, and Nerina. Therefore, with a precocious and bitter penetration, he held what we call happiness for illusions and deceits of fancy; the objects of our desire he called idols, our labors idleness, and everything vanity. Thus he saw nothing here below equal to his own intellect, or that was worthy the throb of his heart; and in inertia, rust, as it were, even more than pain consumed his life, alone in what he called this formidable desert of the world. In such solitude life becomes a dialogue of man with his own soul, and the internal colloquies render more bitter and intense the affections which have returned to the heart for want of nourishment in the world. Mournful colloquies and yet pleasing, where man is



the suicidal vulture perpetually preying upon himself, and caressing the wound that drags him to the grave. . . . The first cause of his sorrow is Recanati: the intellect, capable of the universe, feels itself oppressed in an obscure village, cruel to the body and deadly to the spirit. . . . He leaves Recanati; he arrives in Rome; we believe him content at last, and he too, believes it. Brief illusion! Rome, Bologna, Milan, Florence, Naples, are all different places, where he forever meets the same man, himself. Read the first letter that he writes from Rome: 'In the great things I see I do not feel the least pleasure, for I know that they are marvelous, but I do not feel it, and I assure you that their multitude and grandeur wearied me after the first day.' . . . To Leopardi it is rarely given to interest himself in any spectacle of nature, and he never does it without a sudden and agonized return to himself. . . . Malign and heartless men have pretended that Leopardi was a misanthrope, a fierce hater and enemy of the human race! . . . Love, inexhaustible and almost ideal, was the supreme craving of that angelic heart, and never left it during life. 'Love me, for God's sake,' he beseeches his brother Carlo; 'I have need of love, love, love, fire, enthusiasm, life.' And in truth it may be said that pain and love form the twofold poetry of his life."

Leopardi lived in Italy during the long contest between the classic and romantic schools, and it may be said that in him many of the leading ideas of both parties were reconciled. His literary form was as severe and sculpturesque as that of Alfieri himself, whilst the most subjective and introspective of the romantic poets did not so much color the world with his own mental and spiritual hue as Leopardi. It is not plain whether he ever declared himself for one theory or the other. He was a contributor to the literary journal which

the partisans of the romantic school founded at Florence; but he was a man so weighed upon by his own sense of the futility and vanity of all things that he could have had little spirit for mere literary contentions. His admirers try hard to make out that he was positively and actively patriotic; and it is certain that in his earlier youth, he disagreed with his father's conservative opinions, and despised the existing state of things; but later in life he satirized the aspirations and purposes of progress, though without sympathizing with those of reaction.

The poem which his chief claim to classification with the poets militant of his time rests upon is that addressed To Italy. Those who have read even only a little of Leopardi have read it; and I must ask their patience with a version which drops the irregular rhyme of the piece for the sake of keeping its peculiar rhythm and measure.

My native land, I see the walls and arches,  
The columns and the statues, and the lonely  
Towers of our ancestors,  
But not their glory, not  
The laurel and the steel that of old time  
Our great forefathers bore. Disarmed now,  
Naked thou showest thy forehead and thy breast!  
O me, how many wounds,  
What bruises and what blood! How do I see  
thee,

Thou loveliest Lady! Unto Heaven I cry,  
And to the world: "Say, say,  
Who brought her unto this?" To this and worse,  
For both her arms are loaded down with chains,  
So that unveiled and with disheveled hair,  
She crouches all forgotten and forlorn,  
Hiding her beautiful face  
Between her knees, and weeps.  
Weep, weep, for well thou may'st, my Italy!  
Born, as thou wert, to conquest,  
Alike in evil and in prosperous sort!

If thy sweet eyes were each a living stream  
Thou couldst not weep enough  
For all thy sorrow and for all thy shame.  
For thou wast queen, and now thou art a slave.  
Who speaks of thee or writes,  
That thinking on thy glory in the past  
But says, "She was great once, but is no more."  
Wherefore, oh, wherefore? Where is the ancient  
strength,

The valor and the arms, and constancy?  
Who rent the sword from thee?  
Who hath betrayed thee? What art, or what  
toil,

Or what o'erwhelming force,  
Hath stripped thy robe and golden wreath from  
thee?

How didst thou fall, and when,  
From such a height unto a depth so low?  
Doth no one fight for thee, no one defend thee,  
None of thy own? Arms, arms! For I alone  
Will fight and fall for thee.

Grant me, O Heaven, my blood  
Shall be as fire unto Italian hearts!

Where are thy sons? I hear the sound of arms,  
Of wheels, of voices, and of drums;  
In foreign fields afar  
Thy children fight and fall.

Wait, Italy, wait! I see, or seem to see,  
A tumult as of infantry and horse,  
And smoke and dust, and the swift flash of swords  
Like lightning among clouds.

Wilt thou not hope? Wilt thou not lift and turn  
Thy trembling eyes upon the doubtful close?

For what, in yonder fields,  
Combats Italian youth? O gods, ye gods,  
For other lands Italian swords are drawn!

Oh, misery for him who dies in war,  
Not for his native shores and his beloved,  
His wife and children dear,

But by the foes of others  
For others' cause, and cannot dying say,

"Dear land of mine,  
The life thou gavest me I give thee back."

This suffers, of course, in translation,  
but I confess that in the original it  
wears something of the same perfunctory  
air. His patriotism was the fever-  
flame of the sick man's blood; his real  
country was the land beyond the grave,  
and there is a far truer note in this ad-  
dress to Death.

"And thou, that ever from my life's beginning,  
I have invoked and honored,  
Beautiful Death! who only,  
Of all our earthly sorrows knowest pity:  
If ever celebrated  
Thou wast by me; if ever I attempted  
To recompense the insult  
That vulgar terror offers  
Thy lofty state, delay no more, but listen  
To prayers so rarely uttered:  
Shut to the light forever,  
Sovereign of time, these eyes of weary an-  
guish!"

I suppose that Italian criticism of the  
present day would not give Leopardi  
nearly so high a place among the poets  
as his friend Ranieri claims for him and  
his contemporaries accorded. He seems  
to have been the poet of a national  
mood; he was the final expression of  
that long, hopeless apathy in which Italy

lay bound for thirty years after the fall  
of Napoleon and his governments, and  
the reestablishment of all the little des-  
pots, native and foreign, throughout the  
peninsula. In this time there was un-  
rest enough, and revolt enough of a des-  
ultory and unorganized sort, but every  
struggle, apparently every aspiration, for  
a free political and religious life ended  
in a more solid confirmation of the lead-  
en misrule which weighed down the  
hearts of the people. To such an apathy  
the pensive monotone of this sick  
poet's song might well seem the only  
truth; and one who beheld the universe  
with the invalid's loath eyes, and reason-  
ed from his own irremediable ills to  
a malign mystery presiding over all hu-  
man affairs, and ordering a sad destiny  
from which there could be no defense  
but death, might have the authority of a  
prophet among those who could find no  
promise of better things in their earthly  
lot.

Leopardi's malady was such that  
when he did not positively suffer he had  
still the memory of pain, and he was  
oppressed with a dreary ennui, from  
which he could not escape. Death, ob-  
livion, annihilation, are the thoughts upon  
which he broods, and which fill his verse.  
The passing color of other men's minds  
is the prevailing cast of his, and he  
probably with far more sincerity than  
any other poet nursed his despair in such  
utterances as this:—

#### TO HIMSELF.

Now thou shalt rest forever,  
O weary heart! The last deceit is ended,  
For I believed myself immortal. Cherished  
Hopes, and beloved delusions,  
And longings to be deluded,—all are perished!  
Rest thee forever! Oh, greatly,  
Heart, hast thou palpitated. There is nothing  
Worthy to move thee more, nor is earth worthy  
Thy sighs. For life is only  
Bitterness and vexation; earth is only  
A heap of dust. So rest thee!  
Despair for the last time. To our race Fortune  
Never gave any gift but death. Disdain, then,  
Thyself and Nature and the Power  
Occultly reigning to the common ruin:  
Scorn, heart, the infinite emptiness of all things!

Nature was so cruel a stepmother to this man that he could see nothing but harm even in her apparent beneficence, and his verse repeats again and again his dark mistrust of the very loveliness which so keenly delights his sense. One of his early poems, called *The Quiet* after the Storm, strikes the key in which nearly all his songs are pitched. The observation of nature is very sweet and honest, and I cannot see that the philosophy in its perversion of the relations of physical and spiritual facts is less mature than that of his later work: it is a philosophy of which the first conception cannot well differ from the final expression.

. . . See yon blue sky that breaks  
The clouds above the mountain in the west!  
The fields disclose themselves,  
And in the valley bright the river runs.  
All hearts are glad; on every side  
Arise the happy sounds  
Of toil begun anew.  
The workman, singing, to the threshold comes,  
With work in hand, to judge the sky,  
Still humid; and the damsel next,  
On his report, comes forth to brim her pail  
With the fresh-fallen rain.  
The noisy fruiterers  
From lane to lane resume  
Their customary cry.  
The sun looks out again, and smiles upon  
The houses and the hills. Windows and doors  
Are opened wide; and on the far-off road  
You hear the tinkling bells and rattling wheels  
Of travelers that set out upon their journey.

Every heart is glad;  
So grateful and so sweet  
When is our life as now?

O Pleasure, child of Pain  
Vain joy which is the fruit  
Of bygone suffering overshadowèd  
And wrung with cruel fears  
Of death, whom life abhors;  
Wherein, in long suspense,  
Silent and cold and pale,  
Man sat, and shook and shuddered to behold  
Lightnings and clouds and winds,  
Furious in his offense!  
Beneficent Nature, these,  
These are thy bounteous gifts;  
These, these are the delights  
Thou offerest unto mortals! To escape  
From pain is bliss to us;  
Anguish thou scatterest broadcast, and our woes  
Spring up spontaneous, and that little joy  
Born sometimes, for a miracle and show,  
Of terror is our mightiest gain. O man,

Dear to the gods, count thyself fortunate  
If now and then relief  
Thou hast from pain, and blest  
When death shall come to heal thee of all pain!

"The bodily deformities which humiliated Leopardi, and the cruel infirmities that agonized him his whole life long, wrought in his heart an invincible disgust, which made him invoke death as the sole relief. His songs, while they express discontent, the discord of the world, the conviction of the nullity of human things, are exquisite in style; they breathe a perpetual melancholy, which is often sublime, and they relax and pain your soul like the music of a single chord, while their strange sweetness wins you to them again and again." This is the language of an Italian critic who wrote after Leopardi's death, when already it had begun to be doubted whether he was the greatest Italian poet since Dante. A still later critic finds Leopardi's style "without relief, without lyric flight, without the great art of contrasts, without poetic leaven," hard to read. "Despoil those verses of their masterly polish," he says, "reduce those thoughts to prose, and you will see how little they are akin to poetry."

I have a feeling that my versions apply some such test to Leopardi's work, and that the reader sees it in them at much of the disadvantage which this critic desires for it. Yet, after doing my worst, I am not wholly able to agree with him. It seems to me that there is the indestructible charm in it which, wherever we find it, we must call poetry. It is true that "its strange sweetness wins you again and again," and that this "lovely pipe of death" thrills and solemnly delights as no other stop has done. Let us hear it again, as the poet sounds it, figuring himself a Syrian shepherd, guarding his flock by night, and weaving his song under the Eastern moon:—

O flock that liest at rest, O blessed thou  
That knowest not thy fate, however hard,

How utterly I envy thee!  
 Not merely that thou goest almost free  
 Of all this weary pain, —  
 That every misery and every toil  
 And every fear thou straightway dost forget, —  
 But most because thou knowest not ennui  
 When on the grass thou liest in the shade.  
 I see thee tranquil and content,  
 And great part of thy years  
 Untroubled by ennui thou passest thus.  
 I likewise in the shadow, on the grass,  
 Lie, and a dull disgust beclouds  
 My soul, and I am goaded with a spur,  
 So that, reposing, I am farthest still  
 From finding peace or naught.  
 And yet I want for pleasure,  
 And have not had till now a cause for tears.  
 What is thy bliss, how much,  
 I cannot tell; but thou art fortunate.

Or, it may be, my thought  
 Errs, running thus to other's destiny:  
 May be, to everything,  
 Wherever born, in cradle or in fold,  
 That day is terrible when it was born.

It is the same note, the same voice;  
 the theme does not change, but perhaps  
 it is deepened in this ode: —

ON THE LIKENESS OF A BEAUTIFUL  
 WOMAN CARVEN UPON HER TOMB.

Such wast thou: now under earth  
 A skeleton and dust. O'er dust and bones  
 Immovably and vainly set, and mute,  
 Looking upon the flight of centuries,  
 Sole keeper of memory  
 And of regret is this fair counterfeit  
 Of loveliness now vanished. That sweet look,  
 Which made men tremble when it fell on them,  
 As now it falls on me; that lip, which once,  
 Like some full vase of sweets,  
 Ran over with delight; that fair neck, clasped  
 By longing, and that soft and amorous hand,  
 Which often did impart  
 An icy thrill unto the hand it touched;  
 That breast, which visibly  
 Blanched with its beauty him who looked on it, —  
 All these things were, and now  
 Dust art thou, filth, a fell  
 And hideous sight hidden beneath a stone.

Thus fate hath wrought its will  
 Upon the semblance that to us did seem  
 Heaven's vividdest image! Eternal mystery  
 Of mortal being! To-day the ineffable  
 Fountain of thoughts and feelings vast and high,  
 Beauty reigns sovereign, and seems  
 Like splendor thrown afar  
 From some immortal essence on these sands,  
 To give our mortal state  
 A sign and hope secure of destinies  
 Higher than human, and of fortunate realms,  
 And golden worlds unknown.  
 To-morrow, at a touch,

Loathsome to see, abominable, abject,  
 Becomes the thing that was  
 All but angelical before;  
 And from men's memories  
 All that its loveliness  
 Inspired forever faints and fades away.

Ineffable desires  
 And visions high and pure  
 Rise in the happy soul,  
 Lulled by the sound of cunning harmonies,  
 Whereon the spirit floats,  
 As at his pleasure floats  
 Some fearless swimmer over the deep sea;  
 But if a discord strike  
 The wounded sense, to naught  
 All that fair paradise in an instant falls.

Mortality! if thou  
 Be wholly frail and vile,  
 Be only dust and shadow, how canst thou  
 So deeply feel? And if thou be  
 In part divine, how can thy will and thought  
 Be things so poor and base  
 So easily be awakened and quenched?

Let us touch for the last time this  
 pensive chord, and listen to its response  
 of hopeless love. This poem, in which  
 he turns to address the spirit of the poor  
 child whom he loved boyishly at Reca-  
 nati, is pathetic with the fact that possi-  
 bly she only ever reciprocated the ten-  
 derness with which his heart was filled.

TO SYLVIA.

Sylvia, dost thou remember  
 In this that season of thy mortal being  
 When from thine eyes shone beauty,  
 In thy shy glances fugitive and smiling,  
 And joyously and pensively the borders  
 Of childhood thou didst traverse?

All day the quiet chambers  
 And the ways near resounded  
 To thy perpetual singing.  
 When thou, intent upon some girlish labor,  
 Sat'st utterly contented,  
 With the fair future brightening in thy vision.  
 It was the fragrant month of May, and ever  
 Thus thou thy days beguiledst.

I, leaving my fair studies,  
 Leaving my manuscripts and toil-stained volumes,  
 Wherein I spent the better  
 Part of myself and of my young existence,  
 Leaned sometimes idly from my father's win-  
 dows,  
 And listened to the music of thy singing,  
 And to thy hand, that fleetly  
 Ran o'er the threads of webs that thou wast weav-  
 ing.  
 I looked to the calm heavens,

Unto the golden lanes and orchards,  
And unto the far sea and to the mountains:  
No mortal tongue may utter  
What in my heart I felt then.

O Sylvia mine, what visions,  
What hopes, what hearts, we had in that far sea-  
son !

How fair and good before us  
Seemed human life and fortune !  
When I remember hope so great, beloved,  
An utter desolation  
And bitterness o'erwhelm me,  
And I return to mourn my evil fortune.  
O Nature, faithless Nature,  
Wherefore dost thou not give us  
That which thou promisest ? Wherefore deceiv-  
est,  
With so great guile, thy children ?

Thou, ere the freshness of thy spring was with-  
ered,  
Stricken by thy fell malady, and vanquished,  
Didst perish, O my darling ! and the blossom  
Of thy years never sawest ;  
Thy heart was never melted  
At the sweet praise, now of thy raven tresses,  
Now of thy glances amorous and bashful ;  
Never with thee the holiday-free maidens  
Reasoned of love and loving.

Ah ! briefly perished, likewise,  
My own sweet hope ; and destiny denied me  
Youth, even in my childhood.  
Alas, alas, beloved  
Companion of my childhood !  
Alas, my mourned hope ! how art thou vanished  
Out of my place forever !  
This is that world ? the pleasures,  
The love, the labors, the events, we talked of,  
These, when we prattled long ago together ?  
Is this the fortune of our race, O Heaven ?  
At the truth's joyless dawning,  
Thou fellest, sad one, with thy pale hand pointing  
Unto cold death, and an unknown and naked  
Sepulchre in the distance.

These pieces fairly indicate the range  
of Leopardi, and I confess that they and  
the rest that I have read leave me some-  
what puzzled in the presence of his rep-  
utation. This, to be sure, is largely  
based upon his prose writings — his di-  
alogues, full of irony and sarcasm —  
and his unquestionable scholarship. But  
the poetry is the heart of his fame, and  
is it enough to justify it ? I suppose  
that such poetry owes very much of its  
peculiar influence to that awful love we  
all have of hovering about the idea of  
Death, — of playing with the great cat-  
astrophe of our several tragedies and

farces, and of marveling what it can  
be. There are moods which the languid  
despair of Leopardi's poetry can always  
evoke, and in which it seems that the  
most life can do is to leave us, and let  
us lie down and cease. But I fancy we  
all agree that these are not very wise or  
healthful moods, and that their indul-  
gence does not fit us particularly well for  
the duties of life, though I never heard  
that they interfered with its pleasures ;  
on the contrary, they add a sort of zest  
to enjoyment. Of course the whole  
transaction is illogical. But if a poet  
will end every pensive strain with an ap-  
peal or an apostrophe to Death ; not  
the real Death, that comes with a sharp,  
quick agony, or "after long lying in  
bed," after many days or many years of  
squalid misery and slowly dying hopes  
and medicines that cease even to relieve  
at last ; not this Death, that comes in  
all the horror of undertaking, but a pic-  
turesque and impressive abstraction,  
whose business it is to relieve us in the  
most effective way of all our troubles,  
and at the same time to avenge us some-  
how upon the indefinitely ungrateful and  
unworthy world we abandon, — if a  
poet will do this, we are very apt to like  
him. There is little doubt that Leo-  
pardi was sincere, and there is little rea-  
son why he should not have been so, for  
life could give him nothing but pain.

De Sanctis, whom I have quoted al-  
ready, and who speaks, I believe, with  
rather more authority than any other  
modern Italian critic, and certainly with  
great clearness and acuteness, does not  
commit himself to specific praise of Leo-  
pardi's work. But he seems to regard him  
as an important expression, if not force  
or influence, and he has some words  
about him, at the close of his *History of  
Italian Literature*, which have interested  
me, not only for the estimate of Leo-  
pardi which they embody, but for the  
singularly distinct statement which they  
make of the modern literary attitude.  
I should not, myself, have felt that Le-

opardi represented this, but I am willing that the reader should feel it, if he can. De Sanctis has been speaking of the romantic period in Italy, when he says, —

"Giacomo Leopardi marks the close of this period. Metaphysics at war with theology had ended in this attempt at reconciliation. The multiplicity of systems had discredited science itself. Metaphysics was regarded as a revival of theology. The Idea seemed a substitute for Providence. Those philosophies of history, of religion, of humanity, had the air of poetical inventions. . . . That reconciliation between the old and new, tolerated as a temporary political necessity, seemed at bottom a profanation of science, a moral weakness. . . . Faith in revelation had been wanting; faith in philosophy itself was now wanting. Mystery reappeared. The philosopher knew as much as the peasant. Of this mystery, Giacomo Leopardi was the echo in the solitude of his thought and his pain. His skepticism announced the dissolution of this theologico-metaphysical world, and inaugurated the reign of the arid True, of the Real. His songs are the most profound and occult voices of that laborious transition called the nineteenth century. That which has importance is not the brilliant exterior of that century of progress, and it is not without irony that he speaks of the progressive destinies of mankind. That

which has importance is the exploration of one's own breast, the inner world, virtue, liberty, love, all the ideals of religion, of science, and of poetry, — shadows and illusions in the presence of reason, yet which warm the heart, and will not die. Mystery destroys the intellectual world; it leaves the moral world intact. This tenacious life of the inner world, despite the fall of all theological and metaphysical worlds, is the originality of Leopardi, and gives his skepticism a religious stamp. . . . Every one feels in it a new creation. The instrument of this renovation is criticism. . . . The sense of the real continues to develop itself; the positive sciences come to the top, and cast out all the ideal and systematic constructions. New dogmas lose credit. Criticism remains intact. The patient labor of analysis begins again. . . . Socialism reappears in the political order, positivism in the intellectual order. The word is no longer liberty, but justice. . . . Literature also undergoes transformation. It rejects classes, distinctions, privileges. The ugly stands beside the beautiful; or rather, there is no longer ugly or beautiful, neither ideal nor real, neither infinite nor finite. . . . There is but one thing only, the Living."

I began by calling Leopardi the Laureate of Death; I end by letting another proclaim him the Laureate of Life. Perhaps there is no difference, though I am not yet realist enough to affirm this.

*W. D. Howells.*

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### A TAUNT.

In the oldest wood, I know a brooklet,  
That bubbles over stones and roots,  
And ripples out of hollow places,  
Like music out of flutes.

There creeps the pungent breath of cedars,  
Rich coolness wraps the air about,



Whilst through clear pools electric flashes  
Betray the watchful trout.

I know where wild things lurk and linger,  
In groves as gray and grand as Time;  
I know where God has written poems  
Too strong for words or rhyme.

Come, let us go, each pulse is precious  
Come, ere the day has lost its dawn;  
And you shall quaff life's finest essence  
From primal flagons drawn!

Just for a day slip off the tether  
Of hothouse wants, and dare to be  
A child of Nature, strong and simple,  
Out in the woods with me.

Out in the woods, on freedom's bosom,  
We shall be worthy sons of men,  
Bred of remotest sires who bearded  
The satyr in his den.

Come, just a sip of the wild man's nectar  
Shall show you life from a point of view  
As old as the oldest stones of the mountains,  
And yet as fresh as dew!

Supple joints and bulging muscles,  
Sinews taut as the cords of a harp,  
Veins full-flushed, eyes clear as water,  
And all the senses sharp!

Who was Shakespeare? Where is Homer?  
Can Milton leap, or dance, or run?  
Should you care to cast a fly with Walton?  
Do you envy Napoleon?

What of this lore of buried thinkers?  
What of these classic depths and heights?  
Better one strong, bright, living creature  
Than a myriad trilobites!

Ah, I see you scoff at my meaning,  
You flaccid, indolent bookworm, you!  
What would you give for my good digestion  
And my nerve-cords sound and true?

*Maurice Thompson.*

## A COUNTRY GENTLEMAN.

## XXVII.

A MINUTE after Warrender was in the room where Lady Markland sat, with her great writing-table against the light. He did not know how he got there. It seemed impossible that it could have been by mere walking out of one room into another in the ordinary mechanical way. She rose up, dark against the light, when he went in, which was not at all her habit, but he was not sufficiently self-possessed to be aware of that. She turned towards him, which perhaps was an involuntary, instinctive precaution, for against the full daylight in the great window he could but imperfectly see her features. The precaution was unnecessary. His eyes were not clear enough to perceive what was before him. He saw his conception of her, serene in a womanly majesty far above his troubled state of passion, and was quite incapable of perceiving the sympathetic trouble in her face. She held out her hand to him before he could speak, and said, with a little catch in her breath, "Oh, Mr. Warrender! I — Geoff — we were not sure whether we should see you to-day."

This was a perfectly unintentional speech, and quite uncalled for; for nobody could be more regular, more punctual, than Warrender. It was the first thing she could find to say.

"Did you think I could stay away?" he asked, in a low and hurried tone, which was not at all the beginning he had intended. Then he added, "But I have given Geoff a holiday: if you can accord me a little time — if I may speak to you?" —

"Geoff is not like other boys," she said, with a nervous laugh, still standing with her back to the light. "He does not rejoice in a holiday, like most

children; you have made him love his work."

"It is not about Geoff," he said. "I have — something to say to you, if you will hear me. I — cannot be silent any longer."

"Oh," she said, "you are going to tell me — I know what it is you are going to say — that this cannot continue. I knew that must come sooner or later. Mr. Warrender, you don't need to be told how grateful I am; I thank you, from the bottom of my heart. You have done so much for us. It was clear that it could not — go on forever." She put out her hand for her chair, and drew it closer, and sat down, still with her back to the window; and now, even in his preoccupation with his own overwhelming excitement, he saw that she too trembled a little, and that there was agitation in her tone.

"Lady Markland, it is not that. It is more than that. The moment has come when I must — when I cannot keep up these pretenses any longer. Ah!" for she made a little movement with her hand as if to impose silence, "must it be so? Must I go unheard?" He came closer to her, holding out his hands in the eloquence of nature, exposing his agitated countenance to the full revelation of the light. "It is not much, is it, in return for a life — only to be allowed to speak, once: for half an hour, for five minutes — once — and then to be silent?" Here he paused for breath, still holding out his hands in a silent appeal. "But if that is my sentence I will accept it," he said.

"Oh, Mr. Warrender, do not speak so. Your sentence! from me, that am so deeply in your debt — that never can repay — but I know you never thought of being repaid."

"You will repay me now, tenfold, if you will let me speak."

She put out her hand towards a chair, pointing him to it, and gave him an agitated smile. "Of course you shall speak, whatever you wish or please, as if to your mother, or your elder sister, or an old, old friend."

She put up this little barrier of age instinctively, hastily snatching at the first defensive object she could find. And he sat down as she bade him: but now that he had her permission said nothing, — nothing with his tongue, but with his clasped hands and with his eyes so much, that she covered hers with an involuntary movement, and uttered a little agitated cry. For the moment he was incapable of anything more.

"Mr. Warrender," she said tremulously, "don't, oh, don't say what will make us both unhappy. You know that I am your — friend; you know that I am a great deal older than you are, Geoff's mother, not a woman to whom — not a woman open to — not a" —

"I will tell you," he said, "I know better; this one thing I know better, — a woman as far above me as heaven is above earth, whom I am not worth a look or a word from. Do you think I don't know that? You will say I ought not to have come, knowing what I did, that there was no woman but you in the world for me, and that you were not for me, nor ever would have any thought of me. I should have taken care of myself, don't you think? But I don't think so," he added, almost with violence. "I have had a year of paradise. I have seen you every day, and heard you speak, and touched your hand. Tomorrow I shall curse my folly that could not be content with that. But to-day I am mad, and I cannot help myself. I can't be silent, though it is my only policy. Morning and night I think of nothing but you. When I go to sleep, and when I wake, and even when I dream, I can't think of anything but only

of what you will say. That is what I am going over and over all day long, — every little word that you say."

He poured this forth with a haste and fluency utterly unlike his usual mode of speech, never taking breath, never taking his eyes from her, a man possessed; while she, shrinking back in her chair, her eyes cast down, her hands nervously clasping and unclasping each other, listened, beaten down by the tempest of an emotion such as she had never seen before, such as she could scarcely understand. She had been wooed long ago, lightly wooed, herself almost a child; the whole matter little more than a frolic, though it turned into a tragedy; but she did not know and had never met with anything like this. He paused a little to recover his breath, to moisten his parched lips, which were dry and hot with excitement, and then he resumed.

"You talk of a mother, a sister, a friend. I think you want to mock me, Lady Markland. If you were to say a woman I ought to be content to worship, then I could understand you. I know I ought to have been content — except that I have gone distracted and can't be silent, can't keep quiet. Oh, forgive me for it. Here is my life which is all yours, and my heart to put your foot on if you please; all of me belongs to you; I wish no better, only forgive me for saying it — just once, once!" In his vehemence he got down on his knees — not by way of kneeling to her, only to get nearer, to come within reach. He touched her hand as if it had been the sceptre of mercy. "Speak to me," he said, "speak to me! even if to tell me that I am a castaway!"

Lady Markland got up quickly, with a look of pain, as if she would have fled. "How could you be a castaway?" she cried. "Oh, Mr. Warrender, have pity on me! What can I say? Why should not we live, as we have been doing, in peace and quiet? Why should

these dreadful questions be raised? Listen to me a little. Can friends not be friends without this? I am old, I am married! There never could be any question of — Oh, listen to me! All this that you have been telling me is pity. Yes, it is pity. You are so sorry for me. You think I am helpless and want — some one to take care of me, like other women. Stop, stop! it is not so! You must hear me out. I am not so helpless; and you are young; and some one better than me, some fresh girl, some one like yourself — Theo!" This name came from her lips like a cry, because he had drawn nearer as she drew away from him, and had got her hand in both his and was kissing it desperately, as if he never would let it go. She never called him by this name, and yet it was so usual in the house that it did not sound as does a man's Christian name suddenly pronounced by the woman he loves, like a surrender and end of all contention. But she did not, even when she made that cry, withdraw her hand from him. She covered her face with the other, and stood swaying slightly backward away from him, a figure full of reluctance, pain, almost terror; yet without either word or gesture that should send him away.

"Some one," he cried, "like myself! I want no one, nothing in the world, but you! It is not I that have raised the question, it is something stronger than I. Pity! Oh, how dare you! how dare you!" He kissed her hand with a kind of fury between every word. "I, sorry for the woman whom I worship, thinking she needs me! Good heaven! are you such a woman as you are, and know so little? Or is it true about women that they don't know love, or want love, but only something tame, something quiet, — what you call affection?" He stopped with his voice full of scorn, notwithstanding the paroxysm of passion, and looked up

at her, though on his knees, in the superiority which he felt. "You want a friend that will be tame and live in peace and quiet; and I, you think, want a fresh girl, like myself. Do you mean to insult us both, Lady Markland? Yes, strike! Order me away from you; but don't mock me! — don't mock me!" Then out of scorn and superiority he sank again into the suppliant. "I will be tame, if you like; anything that you like. Only don't send me away!"

She drew her hand away from him, at last, and sank into her chair, with her heart in such a commotion, that she scarcely heard what he was saying for the loud beating in her ears. Then she made a stand again, having been, as it were, beaten from the first parallels, carried away by that fiery charge. She recovered herself a little; controlled the hurrying pulses; called back her strength. She said with a trembling voice, "Oh, let us be calm, if we can! Think a little of my position, and yours. O Theo! think, besides, what I have said, that I am old. How can I bid you go, I who owe to you — you will not let me say it, but I feel it in my heart — so much, so much, of the comfort of my life! I tell you again, you should have said what you have been saying to a girl — who would have put her hand in yours and that would have been all" —

He put out his hand to take hers once more, but this time she refused him.

"Sit there and let us talk. If I had been that girl! — but I am not, I never can be. I am a woman who have had to act for myself. I am Geoff's mother. I must think of him and what has to be done for him. How can you say I mock you? We are two reasonable beings. We must think; we cannot be carried away by — by — by fancy, by what you call" —

Her voice broke, she could not go on, what with the hurrying of her blood, the scrutiny of his looks, the passion in him

which infected her. She waved her hand to him to sit down, to be calm, to listen : but she had no voice to speak.

"I am not reasonable," he replied, "no, don't think it ; there is no reason in me. Afterwards, I will hear all there is to say. You shall make conditions, explanations, anything you please. Now is not the time for it. Tell me, am I to go or stay?" He was hoarse, while she was dumb. With both the question had gone far beyond the bounds of that reason to which she had appealed. "That is the only thing," he repeated. "Tell me : am I to go or stay?"

Looking forward to this, it had seemed that there was much to be said : on his side all the eloquence of passion ; on hers the specious arguments of a woman who thinks she may still be able to withhold and restrain. All these possibilities had fled. They looked at each other, almost antagonists, because of being so much the reverse. She drew back, holding herself apart ; unwilling to accept the necessity of that decision, not knowing how to escape from it ; holding her hands clasped together that he might not secure them ; her heart fluttering in her throat, her head throbbing with pain and excitement. Ah, if she had been that girl ! If he had sought one like himself ! She felt it, too, even in the scorn with which he repulsed the suggestion ; and for a moment it hung on the balance of a thought, on the turn of a look, whether his patience might not give way ; whether his fastidious temper might not take fire at the aspect of the reluctance with which she held away from him, kept back, would not yield. But, on the other hand, the very reluctance, was it not a subtle attraction, a charm the more ; giving a sweetness beyond all speaking to the certainty that, underneath all that resistance, the real citadel was won.

After this momentary armistice and pause, in which they both seemed to regain their hurried breath, and the mist

of the combat dispelled a little, he threw himself down by her again, and got both the clasped hands into his own, saying with something between supplication and authority, "I am to stay?"

"I cannot tell. I cannot—I cannot"—

Her voice was almost inaudible ; but it was enough that there was no negative which could be uttered ; and in this way the long battle came to an end in a moment. They looked at each other, scarcely believing it ; asking each other, could it be so ? Even he scarcely ventured to presume that it was so, though he had forced it and taken the decision into his own hands.

There ensued a half hour or more of bewildered happiness, in which it seemed to him, at least, that the world had turned into a different sphere, and to her that there was in life a sweetness which had come to her too late, of which she could never taste the true flavor, nor forget the bitterness behind ; yet which was sweet and wonderful, — too wonderful, almost, to believe. She delivered herself over to listen, to behold the flood of the young man's rapture. It filled her with a kind of admiration and almost terror. She was like his mother, though with a difference. She had not known what love was. It was wonderful to her to see it, to know that she was the object of it ; but as the warm tide touched her, invaded her being, carried her away, there was something of fear mingled with her yielding to that delight. She had been so certain that she would not yield ; and yet had made so poor a resistance ! It was fortunate that he was so lost on his side in the wonder of the new bliss, and had so much to pour forth of triumph and ecstasy, that he accepted the silence on her part without comment even in his own mind. It was too completely un hoped for, too extraordinary, what had already happened, that he should ask for more. Her pas-

sive position, her reticence, but added to the rapture. She was his almost against her will, constrained by the torrent of love which was irresistible, which had carried all her defenses away. This gave her a sort of majesty in the young man's dazzled eyes. He was giddy with joy and pride. It had seemed to him impossible that he could ever win this queen of his every thought; and it became her, as a queen still, to stand almost aloof, reluctant, although in all the sweetness of consent she had been made to yield. It was her part, too, in nature and according to all that was most seemly, to bring him back to the consideration of that invading sea of common life which surrounded his golden isle of happiness. She put up her hand as if to stop his mouth.

"Oh, Theo, there are so many things which we must think of. It cannot be all happiness as you suppose. You are not thinking how many troublesome things I bring with me."

"Let trouble be for to-morrow," he cried; "nothing but joy on this white day."

She looked at him with a shiver, yet a smile. "Ah, you are so young! your heart has no ghosts like mine."

"Speak respectfully of my heart, for it is yours. The ghosts shall be laid, and the troubles will fly away. What are ghosts to you and me? One may be subject to them, but two can face the world."

"Oh, dreamer!" she cried, but the reflection of the light in his face came into hers, almost against her will.

"Not dreamer: lover, a better word. Don't spend your strength for nothing, my lady and mistress. Do you really believe that you can make me afraid, to-day?"

She shook her head, not answering, which indeed he scarcely left her time to do, he had so much to say. His very nature seemed changed, the proud, fastidious, taciturn Warrender babbling like

a happy boy, in the sudden overflow of a bliss which was too much for him.

But while he ran on, a real interruption came: the profane and commonplace burst in with a louder voice than hers. It was not anything of importance equal to the greatness of the crisis: it was only the bell that meant the commonest of all events, the bell for luncheon. It fell into the soft retirement of that paradise, which was something of a fool's paradise to Theo, scaring and startling the pair. She made a start from his side with a guilty blush, and even he for a moment paused with something like a sense of alarm. They looked at each other as if they had been suddenly cited to appear before a tribunal and answer for what they had done. Then he broke into a breathless laugh. "I shall have to leave you. I can't face that ordeal. Oh, what a falling off is here — luncheon! must I leave everything for that?"

"Yes, go, go: it is too much," she murmured, like a culprit whose accomplice may be saved, but who herself must face the judge. "I could not bear it; I could not hold up my head, if you were there."

"One moment!" She was leaning towards him, when Geoff's hasty steps were heard in the hall and his voice that seemed to sound sharp in her very ears, "Where's mamma?" Lady Markland fell back with a face like a ghost, covering it with her hands. Warrender felt as if a sudden flame was lit in his heart. He seized her almost with violence. "I will come back to-night, when he is in bed. Be in the avenue. I must see you again to-day."

"I will, Theo."

"At nine o'clock." He pulled away the hand which still was over her eyes. "You are mine, remember, mine first. I shall count the minutes till I come back. Mine first, mine always."

"Oh, Theo, yes! — for the love of Heaven go!"



Was that how to conclude the first meeting of happy lovers? Warrender rushed through the hall, with his blood on fire, almost knocking over Geoff, who presented himself, very curious and sharp-eyed, directly in the way.

"Oh, I say, Theo!" cried Geoff. "Where are you going, Theo? That's lunch! lunch is on the table. Don't you hear the bell? Can't you stay?"

Warrender waved his hand, he could make no reply. He would have taken the child by the collar and flung him far away into the unknown, if that had been practicable. Ghosts, she had said: Geoff was no ghost, but he was insupportable; not to be seen with composure at that tremendous moment. The young man rushed down the steps, and struck across the drive at a pace like a race-horse, though he was only walking. He forgot even the big black, munching his hay tranquilly in the stable and thinking no harm.

### XXVIII.

Lady Markland came out of her room a little after, paler than usual, with a great air of stateliness and gravity, conscious to her finger-points of the looks that met her, and putting on an aspect of corresponding severity to meet them. Geoff seized and clung to her arm, as he was wont, and found it trembling. He had begun to pour forth his wonder about Theo even before he made that discovery.

"Why, Theo has gone away! He would n't stop for lunch. I shouted to him, but he never paid any attention. Is he ill, or is he in trouble, or what's the — Why, mamma! you are all trembling!"

"Nonsense, Geoff, I have been — sitting with the window open, and it is a little cold to-day."

"Cold!" Geoff was so struck by the absurdity of the statement that he stopped to look at her. "Ah," he said,

"you have not been running up and down to the stables, or you never would think that."

"No, I have been sitting — writing."

"Oh!" said the child again, "were you writing all the time Theo was there? I thought you were talking to Theo. He gave me a holiday because he had something he wanted to say to you."

"I have told you a great many times, Geoff, that you should not call Mr. Warrender Theo. It is much too familiar. You must not presume, because he is so very kind to you" —

"Oh, he does n't mind," said Geoff lightly. "What was he saying to you, mamma?"

By this time they were at table; that is, she was at the bar, — seated, indeed, as a concession to her weakness, — about to be tried for her life before those august judges, Geoff and old Soames, both of whom had their attention fixed on her with an intentness which the whole bench could scarcely equal. She held her head very high, but she did not dare to lift up her eyes.

"Will you have this, or some of the chicken?" she asked, with a voice of solemnity not quite adapted to the question.

"I say, mamma, was it about me, or was it some trouble he was in?"

"My dear Geoff, let us attend to our own business. The chicken is best for you. And why have you been running up and down to the stables? I thought I had said that I objected to the stables."

By dint of thus carrying the war into the enemy's country, she was able to meet her boy's keen eyes, which were sharp with curiosity, "like needles," as old Soames said. Soames, the other of her judges, gave his verdict without hesitation. "She has given him the sack," he said confidentially to the housekeeper, as soon as he could spare a moment. "And a very good thing, too." The housemaids had come to the same con-

clusion, seeing Theo's hurried exit, and the rate at which he walked down the avenue. The news ran through the house in a moment: "My lady has given him the sack." The old servants were glad, because there would then be no change; and the young ones were sorry for the same reason, and partly, too, because of their sympathy for the young lover dismissed, whose distracted departure without his horse went to their tender hearts.

Geoff had to enter into an explanation as to why he had sought the stables as soon as he was dismissed from his books, — an explanation which involved much; for it had already been pointed out to him on various occasions that the coachman and Black were not improving society. Geoff had to confess that it was dull when he had a holiday, that he did n't know where to go, that Black and the coachman were more fun than any one else, — with an expressive glance over his shoulder at old Soames: all which pleas went like so many arrows to Lady Markland's heart. Had she been so neglecting her boy that Black and the coachman had become his valued allies? — she who believed in her heart that up to this moment her life had been devoted to Geoff.

The day passed to her like a day in a fever. Geoff liked it, on the whole. There was no Theo to linger after lunch and interfere with his possession of his mother. The long afternoon was all his, and Lady Markland, though she was, he thought, dull, and sometimes did not hear what he said, letting her attention stray and her eyes go far away over his head, was yet very tender, more affectionate than ever, anxious to inquire into all his wishes and to find out everything he wanted. He talked to her more than he had done at a stretch for a long time, and made it so apparent how completely he calculated upon her as always his companion that Lady Markland's guilty soul was troubled

within her. She faltered once, "But, Geoff, you know you will have to go to school, they all say; and then to Oxford, when you are a man." "Yes, and you can come and live close by my college," the boy said. "Many boys' mothers do, the rector told me." Her heart sank more and more as he opened up his plans before her. It was all quite simple to Geoff. He did not dream of any change in himself, and what change could ever come to her? Presently the manner in which the child calculated upon her, ignoring every personal claim of hers, awoke a little spark of resistance in Lady Markland's breast. A little while ago she would herself have said (nay, this morning she would have said it) that she had no life but in him, that for her there was no future save Geoff's future; and even now it seemed guilt in her that she should have calculations of her own.

But as for saying anything to him on the subject, how could she do it? It was impossible. Had he been a young man, with some acquaintance with life, she thought it would not have been so hard; or had he been a mere child, to whom she could have said that Theo was to be his new papa. But ten; a judge and a critic; a creature who knew so much and so little! Half a dozen times she cleared her throat to begin, to lead the conversation back to Theo, to make some attempt at disclosure; but another look at his face chilled the words on her lips. She could not do it: how could she ever do it? They went out and had a long drive together; they strolled about the park afterwards before dinner, the boy hanging, as was his habit, upon her arm, pressed close to her, talking — about everything in heaven and earth, but never loosening that claim which was supreme, that proprietorship in her which she had never contested till now, never herself doubted. Geoff meant to be very good to his mother, — to be her protector, her support, as soon

as he should be big enough. She was to be his chief companion, always with him, his alone, all his, as she was now. Any other reading of life was not possible to him. He felt sure there was something about Theo which he had not been told, some story which he would get mamma to tell him sooner or later, but never that this story could interfere with himself and his mother: that was impossible, beyond the range of the boy's wildest misgivings. As for Lady Markland, she was more than silenced, she was overawed, by his certainty. She let him run on, her own thoughts drifting away; pulled up now and then by an importunate, repeated question, then wandering again, but never far, only to the impossibility of making Geoff understand. How should she convey to him the first germ of the fact that mother and son are not one; that they separate and part in the course of nature; that a woman in the flower of her life does not necessarily centre every wish in the progress of a little boy? How to tell him this; how to find a language which could express it, in which such a horrible fact could be told! To herself it was terrible, a thing foreign to all her tenets, to all her principles. Even now that she had done it, and bound herself forever, and raised this wall between herself and her child, between herself and her past life, it was terrible to her. If she had ever been certain of anything in her life, it had been that such a step was impossible. Marriage for her who was already married; a new life to come in place of the old; a state of affairs in which Geoff should no longer be first, — in which, in fact, it would be better, an ease to her, that Geoff should be away. Oh, horrible thought! — an ease to her to be without Geoff! She had lived for him; she had said and felt that he was everything to her, the sole object of her love and her life. And now he was an embarrassment, and it would be well for her if he could be got away.

In this confusion of mind mingled with impulses to flight, with impulses of going and throwing herself on Theo's mercy, begging him to give her up, — for she could not do it, — the day passed. Geoff clung to her and talked, — talked incessantly all the day through, giving her his opinions about Theo as well as about everything else; and she listened, hearing some things most distinctly, as it may be believed, but not all, nor near all. Weary, was it possible, of her own child, of the ceaseless voice in her ears? She was conscious of urging him to go to bed, as she would not have thought of doing in other circumstances; urging him against his will, telling him that he was getting later and later, that it made him pale and nervous, that he must go — all because she was anxious to escape, because she had promised to meet — Could a woman sink into lower humiliation, — a woman a mother, not a foolish girl? At last she managed to escape breathlessly, tying a black veil over her head; stealing out, saying a nervous word to Soames about the beautiful moonlight. Even Soames had to see her humiliation. She had to linger, as if she were looking at the moonlight, while Soames stood upon the steps, and with shame and confusion crossed the space before the door, which was all one flood of light, marked only by her little shadow, small and clinging to her feet. She could have wished that there should never be moonlight more, so shamed and mortified and humiliated did she feel. The darkness would have been better; the darkness would have hidden her, at least. In this condition of shame and pain she went along, gliding into what shadow the young trees could throw, brushing against the bushes underneath. And then suddenly, all in a moment, there was calm; ah, more than calm, a refuge from all trouble, a sudden escape from herself and all things that were oppressing her. Without any word said, a sudden meeting in the shade of the

trees, and two where there had been but one, — a young lover and a woman who, Heaven help her, was young too, and could still drop her burden off her shoulders and for a moment forget everything except the arm that supported her, and the whisper close to her ear, and the melting of all her bonds, the melting of her very being into his, the heavenly ease and forgetfulness, the *Vita Nuova* never known before.

It seemed not herself all laden with shame, but another woman, who raised her head, and said to him, shaking as it were her bondage from her, "This is not becoming for you and me. Let us go in. Whatever we have to encounter together, we must not do it in secret. I must not linger about here, Theo, like one of my maids."

"Yet stay a moment," he said. Perhaps the maids have the best of it. The sweet air of the night, the magical light so near them, the contact and close vicinity, almost unseen of each other, added an ethereal atmosphere to the everlasting, always continued tale.

"'T was partly love and partly fear,  
And partly 't was a bashful art,  
That I might rather feel than see  
The swelling of her heart."

After a time, they emerged into the moonlight; slowly moving towards the house; she leaning upon his arm, he stooping over her, a suggestive posture. Soames upon the doorsteps could not believe his eyes. He would have shut up before now, if he had not seen my lady go out. To admire the moonlight! It did not seem to Soames a very sensible occupation; but when he saw her coming back, not alone, wonder and horror crept over him. He watched them with his mouth open, as well as his eyes, and when he went down-stairs and told Black, who had made the horses comfortable for the night, to go and bring out Mr. Warrender's horse, a shock ran through the entire house. After all! But then it was possible that he had

always intended to come back and ride his horse home.

Black walked about (very unwillingly and altogether indifferent to the beauty of the moonlight) for nearly an hour before Warrender came out, with an aspect was very unlike that of the morning. Happiness beamed from him as he walked; and Lady Markland came out to the door to see him start, and called good-night as he rode away. "Good-night — till to-morrow," he said, turning back as long as he could see her, which was a tempting of Providence on the part of a man who was not a great rider, and with a big horse like the black, and so fresh, and irritated to be taken out of the stable at that hour of the night. The servants exchanged looks as my lady walked back with eyes that shone as they had never shone before, and something of that glory about her, that dazzling and mist of self-absorption, which belongs to no other condition of the mind. She went back into the room and shut the door, and sat down where she had been sitting, and delivered herself over to those visions which are more enthralling than any reality; those mingled recollections and anticipations which are the elixir of love. She had forgotten all about herself, — herself as she was before that last meeting. Her age, her gravity, the falseness of the position, the terrible Geoff, all floated away from her thoughts. They were filled only with what he had been saying and doing, as if she had been that "fresh girl" of whom she had spoken to him. She forgot that she was not that girl. She forgot that she was four years (magnified this morning into a hundred) and a whole life in advance of Theo. She thought only — Poor lady, assailed after her time by this love-fever, taking it late and not lightly! — she thought not at all, but surrendered herself to that overwhelming wave of emotion which, more than almost anything else, has the power of filling up all the vacancies of

life. Her troublous thoughts, her shame, her sense of all the difficulties in her way, went from her in that new existence. They were all there unchanged, but for the moment she thought of them no more.

It was not till some time after this that she went upstairs with her candle through the hushed and darkened house, the light in her hand showing still that confused sweet shining in her eyes, the smile that lurked about the corners of her mouth. A faint sound made her look up as she went towards the gallery upon which all the bedrooms opened. Standing by the banister, looking down into the dark hall, was Geoff, a little white figure, his colorless hair ruffled by much tossing on his bed, his eyes dazzled by the light. "Geoff!" She stood still, and her heart seemed to stop beating. To see him there was as if a curtain had suddenly fallen, shutting out all the sweet prospects before her, showing nothing but darkness and danger instead. "Geoff! Is it you out of bed at this hour?"

"Yes, it is me," he said, in a querulous tone; "there is no one else so little in the house: of course it is me."

"You are shivering with cold; have you?"— Her breath seemed to go from her as she came up to him and put her arm round him. "Have you been here long, Geoff?"

"I could n't sleep," said the child, "and I heard a noise. I saw Theo. Has Theo been back here with you? What did Theo want here so late at night?"

He did not look at her, but stared into the candle with eyes opened to twice their usual size.

"Come into my room," she said. "You are so cold; you are shivering. Oh, Geoff! if you make yourself ill, what shall I do?"

He let her lead him into her room, wrap him in a fur cloak, and kneel down beside him to chafe his feet with

her hands; this helped her in the dreadful crisis which had come so suddenly, and which she feared more than anything else in the world. "You must have been about a long time, or you could not have got so cold, Geoff."

"Yes, I have been about a long time. I thought you would come up directly, after Theo went away." He looked at her very gravely as she knelt with her face on a level with his. He had filled the place of a judge before without knowing it; but now Geoff was consciously a judge, interrogating one who was too much like a criminal, who avoided the looks of that representative of offended law. "Theo stayed a long time," he said, "and then he rode away. I suppose he came to fetch his horse." How he looked at her! Her eyes were upon his feet, which she was rubbing, as he lay stretched out on the sofa; but his eyes burned into her, through her downcast eyelids, making punctures in her very brain.

"He did come for his horse." She could hardly hear the words she was saying, for the tumult of her heart in her ears. "But that was not all, Geoff."

For a long minute no more was said; it seemed like an hour. The mother went on rubbing the child's feet mechanically, then bent down upon them and kissed them. No Magdalen was ever more bowed with shame and trouble. Her voice was choked; she could not speak a word in her own defense. If it had been happiness, oh, what a price to pay!

At last Geoff said, with great gravity, "Theo was always very fond of you."

"I think so, Geoff," she answered, faltering.

"And now you are fond of him."

She could say nothing. She put her head down upon the little white feet and kissed them, with what humility, with what compunction!—her eyes dry and her cheeks blazing with shame.

"It's not anything wrong, mamma."

"No, Geoff; oh no, my darling, — they say not: if only you don't mind."

The brave little eyes blinked and twinkled to get rid of unwelcome tears. He put his hand upon her head and stroked it, as if it had been she that was the child. "I do mind," he said. She thought, as she felt the little hand upon her head, that the boy was about to call upon her for a supreme sacrifice; but for a moment there was nothing more. Afterwards he repulsed her a little; very slightly, but yet it was a repulse. "I suppose," he said, "it cannot be helped, mamma. My feet are quite warm now, and I'll go to bed."

"Geoff, is that all you have got to say to me? It can make no difference, my darling, no difference. Oh, Geoff, my own boy, you will always be my first" —

Would he, should he, be her first thought? She paused, conscience-stricken, raising for the first time her eyes to his. But a child does not catch such an unconscious admission. He took no notice of it. His chief object, for the moment, was not to cry, which would be beneath his dignity. His little heart was all forlorn. He had no clear idea of what it was, or of what was going to happen, but only a vague certainty that mamma and Theo were to stand more and more together, and that he was "out of it." He could not talk of grown-up things, as they could; he would be sent to play, as he had been this morning. He, who had been companion, counselor, everything to her, he would be sent out to play. The dreary future seemed all summed up in that. He slid out of her arms, with his little bare feet on the carpet, flinging the fur cloak from him. "I was a little cold because the door was open, but I'm quite warm now; and I'm sleepy, too. And it's long, long past bedtime, don't you think, mamma? I wonder if I was ever as late before?"

He looked at her when he asked that

question: and suddenly before them both, a little vague and confused to the child, to her clear as if yesterday, came the picture of that night when Geoff and she had watched together, he at her feet curled into her dress, while his father lay dying. Oh, *he* had no right to reproach her, no right! and yet the pale, awful face on the pillow, living, yet already wrapt in the majesty of death, rose up before her. She gave a great cry and clasped Geoff in her arms. She was still kneeling, and his slight little white figure swayed and trembled with the sudden weight. To have that face like a spectre rise up before her, and Geoff's countenance averted, his little eyes twitching to keep in the tears, — was there anything in the world worth that? Magdalen! Ah, worse than Magdalen! for that sinner poured out her tears for what was past, whereas all this shame was the price at which she was going to buy happiness to come.

And yet it was nothing wrong.

## XXIX.

Mrs. Warrender and Chatty left the Warren at the end of the week in which these events had taken place. They had a farewell visit from the rector and Mrs. Wilberforce, which no doubt was prompted by kindness, yet had other motives as well. The Warren looked its worst on the morning when this visit was paid. It was a gray day, no sun visible, the rain falling by intervals, the sky all neutral tinted, melting in the gray distance into indefinite levels of damp soil and shivering willows, — that is, where there was a horizon visible at all. But in the Warren there was no horizon, nothing but patches of whitish-gray seen among the branches of the trees, upon which the rain kept up such an endless, dismal patter as became unendurable after a time, — a continual dropping, the water dripping



off the long branches, drizzling through the leaves with incessant, monotonous downfall. The Wilberforces came picking their way through the little pools which alternated with dry patches along all the approaches to the house, their wet umbrellas making a moving glimmer of reflection in the green, damp atmosphere. Inside, the rooms were all dark, as if it had been twilight. Boxes stood about in the hall, packed and ready, and there were those little signs of neglect in the usual garnishing of the rooms which is so apt to occur on the eve of a departure. Chatty, with her hat on, stood arranging a few very wet flowers in a solitary vase, as if by way of keeping up appearances, the usual decorations of this kind being all cleared away. "Theo is so little at home," she said, by way of explanation, "he would get no good of them." Afterwards when she thought of it, Chatty was sorry that she had mentioned her brother at all.

"Ah, Theo! We have been hearing wonderful things of Theo," said Mrs. Wilberforce, as Mrs. Warrender approached from the drawing-room to meet them. "I have never been so surprised in my life; and yet I don't know why I should be surprised. Of course it makes his conduct all quite reasonable when we look back upon it in that light."

"Who speaks of conduct that is reasonable?" said Mrs. Warrender. "It is kinder than reason to come and see us this melancholy day. It is very discouraging to leave home under such skies."

"But you don't need to leave in such a hurry, surely. Theo would never press you: and besides, I suppose, with a larger house so close at hand, they would not live here."

"There is nobody going to live here that I know of, except Theo," said his mother, while Chatty, always kind, took off the visitor's wet cloak. "Notwithstanding the packing and all the fuss the servants love to make, we may surely

have some tea. I ought to ask you to come and sit down by the fire. Though it is June, a fire seems the only comfortable thing one can think of." Mrs. Warrender was full of suppressed excitement, and talked against time, that the callers might not insist upon the one topic of which she was determined nothing should be said. But the rector's wife was not one whom it was easy to balk.

"A fire would be cosy," she said; "but I suppose now the Warren will be made to look very different. With all the will in the world to change, it does need a new start, does n't it, a new beginning, to make a real change in a house?"

This assault was ineffective from the fact that it called forth no remark. As Mrs. Warrender had no answer to make, she took refuge in that which is the most complete of all,—silence,—and left her adversary to watch, as it were, the smoke of her own guns, dispersing vaguely into the heavy air.

"We are going to London, first," Mrs. Warrender said. "No, not for the season; but if any little simple gayeties should fall in Chatty's way"—

"Little simple gayeties are scarcely appropriate to London in June," said the rector, with a laugh.

"No; if we were to be received into the world of fashion, Chatty and I—But that does n't seem very likely. We all talk about London as if we were going to plunge into a vortex. Our vortex means two or three people in South Kensington, and one little bit of a house in Mayfair."

"That might be quite enough to set you going," said Mrs. Wilberforce. "It only depends upon who the people are; though now, I hear that in London there are no invitations more sought after than to the rich parvenus' houses,—people that never were heard of till they grew rich; and then they have nothing to do but get a grand house in

Belgravia, and let it be known how much money they have. Money is everything, alas, now."

"It always was a good deal, my dear," observed the rector, mildly.

"Never in my time, Herbert! Mamma would no more have let us go to such houses! It is just one of those signs of the time which you insist on ignoring, but which one day — This new connection will be a great thing for Chatty, dear Mrs. Warrender. It is such a nice thing for a girl to come out under good auspices."

"Poor Chatty, we cannot say she is coming out," said her mother, "and the Thynnes, I have always understood, were dull people, not fashionable at all."

"Oh, you don't think for a moment that I meant the Thynnes! She has been very quiet, to be sure; but now, of course, with a young husband — And I am sure Chatty does not look more than nineteen; I always say she is the youngest-looking girl of her age. And as she has never been presented, what is she but a girl coming out? But I do think I would wait till she had her sister-in-law to go out with. It may be a self-denial for a mother, but it gives a girl such an advantage!"

"But Chatty is not going to have a husband, either young or old," said Mrs. Warrender, with a laugh which was a little forced. "Ah, here is the tea. I wish we had a fire, too, Joseph, though it is against rules."

"I'll light you a fire, mum," said Joseph, "in a minute. None of us would mind the trouble, seeing as it's only for once, and the family going away."

"That is very good of you, not to mind," said his mistress, laughing. "Light it, then; it will make us more cheerful before we go."

"Ah, Joseph," said the rector's wife, "you may well be kind to your good old mistress, who has always been so considerate to you. For new lords, new

laws, you know: and when the new lady comes" —

Joseph, who was on his knees lighting the fire, turned round with the freedom of an old servant. "There ain't no new ladies but in folks's imagination," he said. "The Warren ain't a place for nothing new."

"Joseph!" cried his mistress, sharply: but she was glad of the assistance thus afforded to her.

And there was a little interval during which Mrs. Wilberforce was occupied with her tea. She was cold and damp, and the steaming cup was pleasant to see; but she was not to be kept in silence even by this much-needed refreshment. "I should think," she resumed, "that the boy would be the chief difficulty. A step-mother is a difficult position; but a step-father, and one so young as dear Theo!"

"Step-fathering succeeds better than step-mothering," said the rector, "so far as my experience goes. Men, my dear, are not so exacting; they are more easily satisfied."

"What nonsense, Herbert! They are not brought so much in contact with the children, perhaps, you mean; they are not called on to interfere so much. But how a mother could trust her children's future to a second husband — For my part I would rather die."

"Let us hope you will never need to do so, my dear," said the rector, at which Mrs. Warrender was glad to laugh.

"Happily none of us are in danger," she said. "Chatty must take the warning to heart, and beware of fascinating widowers. Is it true about the Elms, that the house is empty and every one gone?"

"Thank Heaven! it is quite true; gone like a bubble burst, clean swept out, and not a vestige left."

"As every such place must be, sooner or later," said Mrs. Wilberforce. "That sort of thing may last for a time, but sooner or later" —

"I think," said the rector, "that our friend Cavendish had, perhaps, something to do with it. It appears that it is an uncle of his who bought the house when it was sold three years ago, and these people wanted something done — to the drainage, I suppose. I advised Dick to persuade his uncle to do nothing, hoping that the nuisance — for, I suppose, however wicked you are, you may have a nose like other people — might drive them out; and so it has done apparently," Mr. Wilberforce said, with some complacency, looking like a man who had deserved well of his kind.

"They might have caught fever, too, like other people. I wonder if that is moral, to neglect the drains of the wicked?"

"No," said Mrs. Wilberforce, firmly; "they have not noses like other people. How should they, people living in that way? The sense of smell is essentially a belonging of the better classes. Servants never smell anything. We all know that. My cook sniffs and looks me in the face and says, 'I don't get anything, m'm,' when it is enough to knock you down! And persons of *that* description, living in the midst of every evil! Not that I believe in all that fuss about drains," she added, after a moment. "We never had any drains in the old times, and who ever heard of typhoid fever *then*?"

"But if they had been made very ill?" said Chatty, who, up to this time, had not spoken. "I don't think — surely, Mr. Cavendish would not have done that."

She was a little moved by this new suggestion. Chatty was not interested in general about what was said, but now and then a personal question would rouse her. She thought of the woman with the blue eyes, so wide open and red with crying, and then of Dick with his laugh which it always made her cheerful to think of. Chatty had in her mind no possible link of connection between

these two: but the absence of any power of comprehending the abstract in her made her lay hold all the more keenly on the personal, and the thought of Dick in the act of letting in poisonous gases upon that unhappy creature filled her with horror. She was indignant at so false an accusation. "Mr. Cavendish," she repeated with a little energy, "never would have done that."

"It is all a freak of those scientific men," said Mrs. Wilberforce. "Look at the poor people: they can do a great deal more, and support a great deal more, than we can; yet they live among bad smells. I think they rather like them. I am sure my nursery is on my mind night and day, if there is the least little whiff of anything; but the village children are as strong as little ponies — and where is the drainage there?"

With this triumphant argument she suddenly rose, declaring that she knew the brougham was at the door, and that Mrs. Warrender would be late for the train. She kissed and blessed both the ladies as she took leave of them: "Come back soon, and don't forget us," while to Mrs. Warrender she gave a little friendly pat on the shoulder. "You won't say anything, not even to true friends like Herbert and me: but a secret like that can't be kept, and though you may n't think so, everybody knows."

"Do you think that is true, mamma?" Chatty asked, when the wet umbrellas had again gone glimmering through the shrubberies and under the trees, and the ladies were left alone.

"That everybody knows? It is very likely. There is no such thing as a secret in a little world like ours; everybody knows everything. But still they cannot say that they have it by authority from you and me. It is time enough to talk of it when it is a fact, if it is to be."

"But you have not any doubt of it, mamma?"

"I have doubt of everything till it is

done: even," she said with a smile, as the wheels of the brougham cut the gravel and came round with a little commotion to the door, "of our going away: though I allow that it seems very like it now."

They did go away, at last, leaving the Warren very solitary, damp, and gray, under the rain, — a melancholy place enough for Theo to return to. But he was not in a state of mind to think of that, or of any of his home surroundings grave or gay. Chatty put her head out of the window to look behind her at the melancholy yet dear old house, with tears in her innocent eyes, but Mrs. Warrender, feeling that at last she had shaken herself free from that bondage, notwithstanding the anxiety in her heart for her son, had no feeling to spare for the leave-taking. She waved her hand to Mrs. Bagley at the shop, who was standing out at her door with a shawl over her cap to see the ladies go by. Lizzie stood behind her in the doorway saying nothing, while her grandmother curtsied and waved her hand and called out her wishes for a good journey, and a happy return. Naturally Chatty's eyes sought those of the girl, who looked after her with a sort of blank longing as if she, too, would fain have gone out into the world. Lizzie's eyes seemed to pursue her as they drove past, — poor Lizzie, who had other things in her mind, Chatty began to think, beside the fashion books; and then there came the tall red mass of the Elms, with all its windows shut up, and that air of mystery which its encircling wall and still more its recent history conferred upon it. The two ladies looked out upon it, as they drove past, almost with awe.

"Mamma," said Chatty, "I never told you. I saw the — the lady, just when she was going away."

"What lady?" asked Mrs. Warrender, with surprise.

"I don't think," said Chatty, with a certain solemnity, "that she was any old-

er, perhaps not so old as I. It made my heart sick. Oh, dear mother, must there not be some explanation, some dreadful, dreadful fate, when it happens that one so young?" —

"Sometimes it is so; these are mysteries which you, at your age, Chatty, have no need to go into."

"At my age, which was about the same as hers," said Chatty; "and — oh, mamma, I wanted in my heart to stop her, to bring her to you. She had been crying; she had such innocent looking distracted eyes — and Lizzie said" —

"Lizzie! what had Lizzie to do with it?"

"I promised to tell no one: but you are not any one, you are the same as myself. Lizzie says she knew her long ago: that she was the same as a child still, not responsible for what she is doing — fond of toys and sweets like a child."

"My dear, I am sorry that Lizzie should have kept up such a friend. I believe there are some poor souls that if an innocent girl were to do what you say, stop them and bring them to her mother, might be saved, Chatty. I do believe that: but not — not *this* kind."

The tears by this time were falling fast from Chatty's eyes. "I wonder," she said, "if I shall ever see her again?"

"Never, I hope; for you could do nothing for her. Shut the window, my dear, the rain is coming in. Poor Theo, how wet he will get, coming home! I wonder if he will have the thought to change everything, now that there is no occasion to dress, now that we are away."

"Joseph will give him no peace till he does," said Chatty, happily diverted, as her mother had intended, from sadder thoughts. "And don't you think she will make him stay to dinner on such a day? Don't you think she must care a great deal for him, mamma?"

"She must care for him or she would not have listened to him. Poor Theo!" said the mother, with a sigh.

"But he cares very much for her: and he is happy," said Chatty, with a certain timidity, a half question; for to her inexperience these were very serious drawbacks, though perhaps not such as might have occurred to a more reasonable person. Mrs. Warrender had to change this subject, too, which Chatty showed a disposition to push too far, by making an inquiry into the number of their bags and parcels, and reminding her daughter that they were drawing near the station. It was a very forlorn little station, wet and dismal, with a few men lounging about, the collars of their coats up to their ears, and Mrs. Warrender's maid standing by her pile of boxes, having arrived before them. It had been an event long looked for, much talked of, but it was not a cheerful going away.

The rain had gone off, however, by the time they reached town, and a June day has a power of recovering itself, such as youth only possesses. But no, that is an error, as Mrs. Warrender proved. She had been leaning back in her corner very quiet, saying little, yet with an intense sense of relief and deliverance. She came to London with as delightful a consciousness of novelty and freedom as any boy coming to seek his

fortune. Chatty's feelings were all very mild in comparison with her mother's. She was greatly pleased to see the clouds clear off and the humid sweetness of the skies, which even the breath of the great city did not obscure. "After all, Theo will have a nice evening for his drive home," she said, unexcited. Though it was all very agreeable, Chatty did not know of anything important that might await her in town. She knew more or less, she believed, what awaited her, — a few parties, a play or two, the Row in the morning, the pictures, a pleasant little glimpse of the outside of that fashionable life which was said to be "such a whirl," which she had no expectation, nor any desire to see much of. There was no likelihood that she and her mother would be drawn into that whirl. If all the people they knew asked them to dinner, or even to a dance, which was scarcely to be expected, there would still be no extravagant gayety in that. Driving from the railway to Half Moon Street was as pleasant as anything: to a girl of very highly raised expectations, it might have been the best of all: but Chatty did not anticipate too much, and would not be easily disappointed. She neither expected nor was afraid of any great thing that might be coming to her. Her quiet heart seemed beyond the reach of any touch of fate.

*M. O. W. Oliphant.*

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### A DIPLOMATIC EPISODE.

HISTORICAL and political conjunctures are sometimes curious and unexpected. That William H. Seward should join hands with a Spanish admiral across a gap of three hundred and seventy-five years for the protection of the swarthy republic of San Domingo seems like an exuberant fiction rather than a sober

historical fact. It was the prevailing impression among certain citizens of the United States, some twenty years ago, that this distinguished old admiral was dead. They found to their surprise and confusion that he was still living, and, like the statue in Don Giovanni, could come down from his historic pedestal

and stalk through our diplomatic literature with a proud priority. The enterprise which he so signally defeated was nothing less than an ingenious attempt to rob the great commander of the fame of one of his earliest achievements, and to wrest from the republic of San Domingo one of the island jewels it wears upon its necklace.

Of the multitude of islands that dot the Caribbean Sea there is one so small that spectacles are almost needed to see it on any general map of the West Indies. It is no discredit to our readers to assume that the name of this island is unfamiliar, and that most of them would go to the foot in a geography class, if asked to indicate its location. This island, as described by the United States Coast Survey, is but three quarters of a mile long and about half a mile wide. It is composed almost entirely of a bell-shaped hill, the summit of which is five hundred feet above the sea. Its commanding height makes it a prominent object to the mariner. Seen from a distance it has the appearance of a high sail, and from this fact gets its Spanish name of *Alto Velo*. This island is situated about fifteen miles south of Beata, the southern point of the island of San Domingo.

It was this little bell-shaped dot in the ocean, uninhabited, but not unknown, which at the close of the war was to become the theatre of a complicated and interesting controversy. Notwithstanding the millions of square miles which constitute the territory of the United States, it was perfectly clear to certain citizens of this country (at least to two or three of them) that the dignity and the interest of our government demanded that this island should be annexed to the national domain. When, with melancholy retrospection, we recall the efficiency of our navy at that time, we can see that it would not have been a difficult matter for a few of our war vessels to pluck this island up by

the roots and bring it to the United States. And it is no exaggeration of the facts of history to say that this was actually undertaken by some of our merchant marine. Indeed, it was the attempt to ship this island to New York, where it was to be sold at the rate of fifteen dollars per ton, that occasioned, shortly after, a miniature war-dance at the national capital.

To extract from the mazes of the national archives some of the more interesting and important phases of this diplomatic afterpiece, and to show the historic influences that blended in its solution, is the object of this paper.

In 1856 the Congress of the United States passed what is known as the Guano Island Act, which, by the approval of the President, became a law on the 18th of August of that year. The law substantially declares that when any citizen may have discovered a deposit of guano on any island, rock, or key not within the lawful jurisdiction of any government, and shall take peaceable possession thereof, and keep the same, this island, rock, or key may, at the discretion of the President, be considered as appertaining to the United States. The conditions prescribed were, first, that notice should be given to the Department of State, as soon as practicable, by the discoverer, verified by affidavit, describing the island, its latitude and longitude, and showing that possession was taken in the name of the United States, and that satisfactory evidence be furnished to the State Department that the island was not, at the time of the discovery or occupation, in the possession of any other government or of its citizens.

To the discoverer the exclusive right was granted, at the pleasure of Congress, of occupying such island for the purpose of obtaining guano and of selling and delivering the same to citizens of the United States, and to none others, for the purpose of being used in this coun-



try. The law further contained a significant provision authorizing the President, at his discretion, to employ the land and naval forces of the United States to protect the rights of the discoverer.

The object and provisions of the law are clearly apparent. It was intended to protect and encourage American commercial enterprise. Any citizen of the United States who should discover an uninhabited bird-roost in the ocean might unfurl the flag of the United States above it and carry away as much of the guano as he desired, provided it was used for the enrichment of his own country.

There was only one restriction laid upon the enterprise of the American discoverer: and that was that the island or key should not be within the lawful jurisdiction of any other government and not occupied by its citizens. The inconvenience of this restriction is immediately apparent: it would be so much easier for the American navigator to seize any island that he happened to find without troubling himself about international formalities; it would be so much easier for him to unfurl the American flag over an island which had been discovered three hundred and sixty-two years before the act was passed than to find one previously undiscovered and unknown. It was this embarrassing restriction which caused all the trouble in the Alto Velo case.

Encouraged and inspired by this act of Congress, American vessels fitted out by firms engaged in the guano trade immediately began to cruise in search of islands that were uninhabited and unoccupied, although, as will be seen, sufficient pains were not taken to avoid those under the jurisdiction of other governments.

In May, 1860, four years after the passage of this act, the Department of State received a letter from W. T. Kendall, a Baltimore merchant, stating that

his brig Delta, of Baltimore, Captain R. Daulby, on the 19th of March, 1860, discovered a deposit of guano upon Alto Velo, an island in the Caribbean Sea; that he took possession of the island, loaded his vessel with guano, and sent her home, Captain Daulby remaining on the island with two men to work and hold possession. Mr. Kendall declared, and doubtless believed, that the island lay out of the jurisdiction of any other government and was uninhabited at the time of the discovery.

On the very same date, Messrs. Paterson & Murguendo, another Baltimore firm, wrote to the State Department, claiming to have taken possession of this same island of Alto Velo, and that the island was then in their possession and was occupied by Captain S. A. Kimball and crew of the schooner Boston. The aspect of the case then was simply that two American sea-captains, representing different firms, laid claim to the same island, and that this island was Alto Velo. The question which of them had priority does not materially concern us. In the subsequent proceedings, however, the claim of Paterson & Murguendo assumed more importance, and if the allegations contained in their affidavits were true, priority must be awarded to their claim.

Extracting from the memorials, affidavits, and correspondence with the State Department the significant events in this history, it appears that this Baltimore firm fitted out a vessel, the schooner Boston, of Baltimore, under the command of Captain S. R. Kimball, and that on the 23d of February he took possession of the island of Alto Velo. Captain Kimball put up a written notice of his occupancy of the island, and then left it for the purpose of chartering vessels to export the guano. He returned March 23 and took peaceable possession of the island and proceeded to work and ship the deposits. In the course of the next seven months they

shipped more than a thousand tons of guano, from which they realized a profit of \$9000. During these seven months their occupation of the island was not disturbed. Certain fishing vessels from Hayti visited the island and made no protest against its occupation by the Americans; for the reason, perhaps, that Hayti had no valid claim to it.

The American occupants no doubt congratulated themselves upon the beneficence of this law of Congress, and upon the ease with which they had availed themselves of its privileges. But this industrious and profitable complacency was somewhat disturbed one morning when the men in charge of the island discovered a Dominican man-of-war lying off the shore. Her captain was in an interrogative frame of mind, and asked some ominous questions concerning the nationality of the inhabitants and their business on the island. The claimants alleged that when he went away he took a bucket of guano with him. That the captain of a Dominican man-of-war should have taken a bucket of guano from under the American flag without paying for it must have seemed an unwarrantable liberty to these Americans, who were selling it in New York at fifteen dollars per ton! The Dominican government evidently took time enough to ruminate, for, if the affidavits of the claimants are true, it was not till October 23, or some six weeks later, that the man-of-war, the *Merced*, appeared before the island, under the command of General Juan Evertz, who sent ashore a letter in which the iron doctrine of necessity, represented by a man-of-war, was elegantly upholstered with the velvet courtesies of diplomatic speech. The letter stated that the Dominican government was alarmed at the disagreeable advices that foreigners had violated that portion of Dominican territory which belongs to the province of Azua, with the object of exporting guano. He was

authorized to dislodge them "with the greatest brevity." The commander "trusted that they would not depart from the justice and moderation characteristic of an American, and to reflect upon the consequences that such circumstances would bring on an infraction of international rights." He gave the twelve men on the island twenty-four hours in which to depart. Miller, the American in charge, answered that there was no vessel at the island at that time in which he and his men could embark. The commander of the man-of-war replied, with renewed courtesy, that his own vessel was at their disposal, and that he would with much pleasure receive them in it accompanied by all their men and effects. His instructions, however, forbade him to grant the request of Captain Miller to leave one man on the island. The men and their effects were thereupon removed by the man-of-war and taken to the city of San Domingo. The Dominican government immediately acquainted the United States commercial agent with its action, and although it insisted that it would have a lawful right to try and punish these men, it nevertheless proposed to put them at the disposal of the commercial agent, with all their effects, "reserving to the government of San Domingo the right to reclaim indemnity for the trespasses which had been committed." The men and the materials were therefore delivered to the commercial agent. Throughout this transaction the Dominican government acted with great moderation.

Imagine the surprise, at least the disappointment, of the American agent of this Baltimore firm, Captain Kimball, on arriving at Alto Velo soon after, and finding that it had resumed its primitive condition of solitude. He immediately proceeded to San Domingo, and learning the facts and the particulars of the eviction, offered to pay the Dominican government a fair amount for the

guano which had been taken, and also to buy what was left, on the supposition that the government of San Domingo had a legal right to the island. An amicable discussion followed, in which Captain Kimball stated that the amount of guano shipped was 1033 tons, in six different vessels. The Dominican government proposed indemnity for the guano taken and agreed to urge no claim for the illegal occupation of the island. It fixed the price of the royalty at the moderate sum of eight dollars per ton, and proposed if that price were not satisfactory that the matter be settled by arbitration. Captain Kimball declined to accept the terms proposed and was allowed, with his laborers, to return to the United States. Had he recognized the claim of San Domingo and accepted this agreement, it would have been far better for his employers. He concluded, however, to wrap his cause in the American flag, and to fall back upon the assurance of the guano act that the land and naval forces of the United States might be used to protect the rights of the discoverer.

Messrs. Patterson & Murguendo, the Baltimore firm, lost no time in presenting to the Department of State a claim against the government of San Domingo.

Hon. Jeremiah S. Black, who afterwards figured prominently in this case, was at that time Secretary of State. Although favorably disposed towards the claimants, Mr. Black deemed it desirable, inasmuch as the government of San Domingo was understood to claim jurisdiction over the island, to secure a report from the United States commercial agent at San Domingo, Mr. Cazneau, as to the ground on which its claim to the island was based. Mr. Cazneau reported that by a Dominican law of 1855 the islands of Alto Velo and Beata were defined as a portion of the province of Azua. He recited the fact that the island was uninhabited, and, although

it *claimed* jurisdiction, he knew of no instance in which the Dominican government had exercised a *de facto* jurisdiction.

The cloud of war which had been gathering in the United States during this little commercial episode soon broke upon the country. The government had something more important upon its hands than the disposition of a few tons of insular earth in the Caribbean Sea. Though the attention of the Department of State was frequently solicited by the claimants, all the resources of our arms were engaged at home, while all the resources of our diplomacy were needed to resist intervention from abroad. At the close of Buchanan's administration the portfolio of the State Department had passed from the hands of Mr. Black to those of William H. Seward. Mr. Black subsequently became the attorney for Messrs. Patterson & Murguendo, so that the claimants had the advantage not only of having one of the finest lawyers in the country, but also one under whose administration in the State Department the claim had been filed.

The smoke of the war had scarcely passed away before Mr. Black promptly brought his claim to the attention of the government. It was referred to the State Department for examination. In that department it was committed by Mr. Seward to the Examiner of Claims, Mr. E. Peshine Smith, a lawyer of marked ability. The examiner reported adversely to the claim. The grounds of his decision were that the proofs submitted by the claimants that the island was not in the possession of another government were not sufficient. He insisted that such jurisdiction may exist in a foreign government, though actual possession may not have been taken, or if taken may not have been maintained; he recited a judicial decision of Lord Stowell, in which that judge showed "how fallacious would be an attempt to

deprive the United States of islands in the open sea, or off the mouth of the Mississippi, upon the ground that they were desert, uninhabited, and unoccupied."

The island of Alto Velo lies only fifteen miles from the mainland of San Domingo, or about half as far as Nantucket is from the United States coast, and Mr. Smith pertinently asked whether if the island of Nantucket had remained uninhabited and unoccupied by the government, or any person under its authority, it would be tolerated that a foreign power should seize and occupy it by force. He expressed the opinion that the controlling question in regard to jurisdiction over islands situated like that of Alto Velo is this: Are such adjacent islands necessary to the security and protection of the mainland, so that their occupation by a hostile power would be dangerous?

The examiner's report was laid before the President at a cabinet meeting, and upon recommendation of the Secretary of State was adopted without discussion. A memorandum to that effect was filed in the State Department and a copy furnished to Judge Black.

A man of ordinary courage and persistence would have abandoned his claim at this point; but Judge Black was a man of extraordinary courage and extraordinary persistence. It was just at this exigency that his remarkable abilities were most needed for the protection of his clients. He was not the man to be extinguished by a memorandum from the State Department. He was not only a personal friend of one of his clients, but he was also a personal friend of President Johnson, and at this date in his administration had considerable influence over him. He immediately wrote a letter to the President, accompanied by a skillfully prepared brief, in which he recited, with his accustomed force, the grievous wrongs of his clients. Mr. Black knew how to paint them.

There is every reason to suppose that he painted them conscientiously. We must acquit the American claimants in this matter of all attempts at fraud. They undoubtedly believed in the justice of their cause. In his brief Judge Black claimed that "the island was totally barren and desolate, and had been previously uninhabited and unclaimed by any state, people, or government;" that his clients had taken possession of it under the act of Congress, in the name of the United States, and had filed notice of the discovery and occupation with the State Department, and entered the required bond. He described the eviction of his clients as a case of naked spoliation, and as in open contempt of their rights as discoverers, occupants, and Americans; as a grievous wrong, a shameless robbery; and said "that the faith of the United States is so solemnly pledged to restore their property that their final success in pursuit of justice can hardly be doubted." Mr. Black patriotically referred to the gross insult rendered to the American flag by the Dominican government. He went so far as to assert that the island of Alto Velo, after its occupation by his clients under the guano act, became virtually annexed to the United States, and that to expel the American occupants under such circumstances was like any other invasion of our territory. Judge Black proposed what he termed with correctness "a short and simple way of dealing with the business." This was to send an American man-of-war immediately to the spot and put his clients in possession.

The act of 1856, as already noticed, authorized the President, at his discretion, to employ the land and naval forces of the United States to protect the rights of the discoverer. It did not authorize, however, the use of the navy to wrest a little island from its political setting in the Atlantic which had been established hundreds of years before.

Baron Munchausen, in his famous and

somewhat highly colored narrative, mentions the discovery on his voyage to North America of a floating island. The Baron thought it was altogether disturbing to any fixed geographical notions to have an island floating about in this roving way, so he drove an immense spike through the centre and nailed it fast to the ocean bed. The method proposed by Mr. Black in the case of Alto Velo was entirely the reverse of this. It was to pull up the spike, loose the island from its political connections, and float it off to the United States for the sole benefit of his clients. In his brief Judge Black rightly described this island as "barren, desolate, and uninhabited;" but he did violence to the facts, however, when he stated that it was unclaimed by any state, people, or government. He at least overlooked the fact that while himself Secretary of State he had secured a report from the commercial agent of the United States, who had expressly declared that the island of Alto Velo was defined by the laws of San Domingo of 1855 as a portion of the province of Azua. Rightly or wrongly, therefore, the Dominican government had thus asserted its claim to the island more than a year before Congress had passed the guano act.

Under the pressure of Mr. Black's solicitation, the President once more referred the claim to the Department of State. The matter by this time had become a somewhat complicated one. A New York firm, recognizing the claim of the San Domingo government to this island, had wisely made a contract with that government for the purchase and removal of the guano and were shipping it at a good profit. Messrs. Patterson & Murguendo had thus the mortification of seeing an American firm working under remunerative conditions and under amicable relations to the Dominican government the guano which they claimed by right of discovery. It was too late for them to repent and acknowledge the

right of the Dominican government, as they would better have done in the first place. A man-of-war was needed not only to suppress the claim of San Domingo, but also to eject the Americans who had entered into contract with that government. So far as this was a conflict between citizens of the United States, Mr. Seward declined to enter into it. He referred them to the legal tribunals for the settlement of the controversy. But Messrs. Patterson & Murguendo insisted that the San Domingo government was the responsible party, and the fundamental question came up once more whether, when Messrs. Patterson & Murguendo took possession of that island, it was not in the legal jurisdiction of some foreign country.

The whole question was thus reduced to a purely historical and political one, and this phase of it will probably be more interesting to the reader than the complexities of diplomatic discussion. First, as has already been mentioned, the political claim to the island is a very definite one. This republic achieved its independence of Hayti in 1844. In the constitution which it adopted and proclaimed on the 18th of November of that year, it declared that the ancient Spanish part of the island of San Domingo, with the adjacent islands, formed the territory of the Dominican republic. Among the adjacent islands mentioned as definitely belonging to Dominican territory was the island of Beata and that of Alto Velo. From the report of the United States Coast Survey we see that Beata Island is only four miles from Beata Point on the mainland; and that Alto Velo, instead of being forty miles beyond the extreme point of San Domingo, as alleged by one captain, is only six and a quarter miles from the southwest part of Beata Island. From the report of the Coast Survey we may infer that these islands are really parts of the mainland. There are only three

fathoms between Beata and Beata Point; and although the channel between Alto Velo and Beata is described as quite clear, yet the report says "it will be prudent to keep outside of all."

But Mr. Seward was not content to show that the Dominican government had claimed these islands before the guano act was passed; he determined to show also the historical and ethical foundation on which that claim rested, even if it were necessary to wake a certain famous navigator from the dead. One of the distinguishing traits of Mr. Seward's character comes out in this examination. As a lawyer, he was noted from the beginning of his career for the generosity and power with which he espoused the cause of the weak and friendless. This had a notable illustration in the celebrated Freeman case, in which Mr. Seward, against much popular clamor, defended a half-idiotic criminal arraigned on the charge of murder. The subsequent death of the criminal from a diseased brain vindicated Mr. Seward's judgment as well as his heart. There was another trait in his character which has linked his name with the watchword of liberty: it was his reverence for the Higher Law. He arraigned with moral vigor the injustice of oppression. He proclaimed the everlasting obligation of nations as well as of individuals to do right. So in the Alto Velo case both these characteristics were united, not to disturb the calm impartiality of his judgment, but to give moral vigor to his work. He had an undisguised sympathy with the weak and infantile republic, on the one hand, and a profound sense of the injustice of robbing it of a portion of its territory, on the other hand. Having reached this conclusion on the political and ethical merits of the case, Mr. Seward, when the matter was referred to him again, determined to back it up with an array of irrefutable historical proof.

In the examination that followed, the

value of ancient records and charts in determining territorial rights received a striking illustration.

The State Department had a library, at that time, of about twenty thousand volumes. It contained certain old and dusty folios invaluable to the antiquary, but of little interest to any one else. Some years before, the government had purchased of Dr. John G. Kohl, an eminent German cartographer, his collection of early maps relating to the American continent. Dr. Kohl spent some time in this country cataloguing his maps, but it is a matter of great regret that the inadequate encouragement he received from our government should have driven him back to Europe, where he died in 1878. Hon. Charles Deane, in a notice of his death written for the Massachusetts Historical Society, says of him, "After the death of Humboldt he was unquestionably the most distinguished geographer in Europe."

It could hardly have been supposed at the time this collection was purchased by the United States that it would ever attain any great practical utility. We can imagine some prosaic, hard-headed utilitarian regretting that the government had not spent its six thousand dollars in some more profitable way than on a collection of maps to be stored in its archives. Indeed, little care was taken at the outset to preserve them, and Mr. Justin Winsor, who has lately catalogued this entire collection, in the Harvard University Bulletin, tells us that "at the outbreak of the civil war it was temporarily put in charge of the War Department, placed in an apartment occupied by troops, and barely escaped destruction."

It was this collection of maps, combined with some ancient narratives and records, that suddenly shook off their dust and became of great practical importance in the Alto Velo case. They furnished successive links of evidence



in the strong historical cable which anchored Alto Velo to the Dominican republic. For the sake of consecutiveness we will follow these links in their chronological order.

Starting with the official maps of the United States Coast Survey in current use in 1868, when this investigation was prosecuted, we find, as already noticed in the report quoted, that the island of Alto Velo and those adjoining it were indicated with the accuracy which distinguishes the work of that bureau.

From the Coast Survey report in 1868, we take a leap of seventy-two years to the year 1796. In a map which accompanies M. L. E. Moreau de Saint Méry's *Description Topographical, Natural, Civil, Political, and Historical*, of the French part of the island of St. Domingo, published in Philadelphia, 1797, we find that the boundary line between the French and Spanish parts of San Domingo is prominently indicated, and that Cape Beata, the island La Beata, the island of Alto Velo, and the two contiguous islands called Los Frailes are all carefully put down.

On a French war map of San Domingo made during the revolution for independence in Hayti, the dividing line "betwixt the French and Spaniards fixed in 1776" is indicated. Cape Beata, Beata Island, and Alto Velo are all put down as falling within the Spanish part of the island. Alto Velo is here separated from Beata Island by a strait a little less than six miles wide, and is fourteen miles distant from Cape Beata or the mainland of San Domingo.

Pursuing our search back into the period of the purely Spanish occupancy of the island, we have several maps in the Kohl collection which are without date, but all of which antedate our own national existence.

One of these is an ancient chart, by Visconte de Majoli, of the Antilles and the mainland of Honduras and the cape of Santa Maria in Uruguay. Most of

the West India islands are delineated; among them Spagnola and Isabella. We find a projection of the coast corresponding to Cape Beata, and south of it are two islands which correspond to Beata and Alto Velo, but without names.

On another chart, without date, of the same collection, probably of the sixteenth century, Cuba, Bahama, and Spagnola are named and Yucatan is put down as an island. South of "Spagnola" we find four small islands, two of which correspond to Alto Velo and Beata, although they are not accurately indicated.

On another ancient chart of the east coast of America from Hudson's Bay to the Straits of Magellan, the island of Hayti is named Spagnola, and it has several islands on its south side, although they are not named.

A map of the east coast of America from New Brunswick to the Amazon River shows "Hespanhol" among the larger West India islands, and adjacent to it three islands, one marked Beata, another "Frailes," while the third, corresponding to Alto Velo, is left unnamed. The position of "Frailes" is interchanged with Alto Velo.

But we are not left to the probabilities of undated maps, even though some of them are very ancient, or to mere conjectures concerning name and situation. We may follow a chronological path with very definite milestones upon it. In the work of Antonio de Herrera entitled *A Description of the West Indies* (*Descripcion de las Indias occidentales*, 1601), there is a map of the Antilles. It was made nineteen years before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth or the slave ship sailed up the James. It gives the outline of the main island with considerable accuracy and records the name of the adjacent islands. Among them we find Beata and Alto Velo, though they are written Sabeata and Altobelo.

Returning to the Kohl collection, we

find a copy of an original chart of the West Indies bearing this inscription, "Thomas Hood made this platte, 1592," and beneath it a pen and ink flourish, looking very much like a spiral bed-spring, which seems to indicate that Thomas Hood was well satisfied with himself and his work. We have since thought that the author would have felt like adding another flourish to his signature if he had known that his putting down the name of Alto Velo would be used two hundred and seventy-six years later to contradict the preposterous claim of two modern navigators to the discovery of this island.

And yet old as is this map, it is modern compared with the evidence that antedates it.

Twenty-eight years earlier we have Paulo Forlano's map of San Domingo, made in 1564. This is a map drawn on a large scale, and correct proportions are not always observed; but south of the island we find Alto Velo and Beata. Alto Velo is exaggerated in size, but, considering all the experiences it was destined to go through, perhaps not in importance.

In the third volume of Ramusio's celebrated work (*Delle navigationi et viaggi*, 1556), we have a map in which the cluster of islands is properly indicated off the southern coast, but the name of Beata is incorrectly given to the island of Alto Velo, while Beata is named Delobos, which was the name of the cape afterward known as Cape Beata.

Going back twenty-two years earlier, to 1534, we come to the oldest engraved map of Hispaniola, which was copied by Kohl from the work of Oviedo. (*Libro Primo della Historia, delle Indie occidentale cavate da libri scritti del P. Marted Oviedo. Venezia, 1534.*)

This map is one of more accuracy in regard to the subject of our examination than several that followed it. Beata, Alto Velo, and Los Frailes are

all given in their proper relation, but only Beata is named.

In 1528 Bordone issued the first edition of his well known *Isolario*, an attempted description of all the islands of the world. He gives charts of the important Antilles, and among others has outlined Spagnola. The extinct city of Isabella is named upon it, but none of the natural features of the island, its capes, bays, or adjacent islands are named. Nevertheless Beata, Alto Velo, and Los Frailes are all indicated in their proper position.

In the grand ducal library at Weimar are two of the most important and interesting maps relating to this country. One of them is the map of Ribero, made in 1529, the other a map made in 1527, which has been generally attributed to Ferdinand Columbus, though modern critics disallow this claim. Admirable fac-similes of these maps were published by Dr. Kohl in 1860 in his work in German entitled *Die Beiden Aeltesten General Karten von America*.

Both of these maps are highly illuminated and are good specimens of the beautiful work of that period. In Ribero's map of 1529 the main island appears under the name Haiti, and the two adjacent islands, Alto Velo and La Beata, are named and marked with distinctness and accuracy. In the map of 1527 the position of both islands is marked, but only La Beata is named.

But we have not yet reached the end of our geographical chain. Old as are these maps of 1529 and 1527, there is still another and older link. In 1832 Alexander von Humboldt, while industriously working in the Paris libraries, during the cholera time, found in the valuable library of Baron Walckenaer what was supposed to be a Portuguese map of the world. The acute eyes of the great geographer discovered in one corner an inscription: "Juan de la Cosa la fizo en el Puerto de Sta. Maria en ano de 1500." Near to this inscription

was a small colored picture representing Christopher bearing on his back through the sea the Christ child, who held the world-globe in his hand, a happy application of the legend of Saint Christopher to Christopher Columbus, and recalling one of the great objects which he had in mind and heart in his search for the New World: namely, the extension of Christianity to the regions he might discover, and the renewed prosecution of the crusades from the treasures he hoped to acquire.

Humboldt had thus exhumed from a library and published to the world the oldest known map of the New World, and one of the most important in the history of European knowledge concerning it. What has this map made by La Cosa three hundred and sixty-eight years before this controversy to say when placed on the witness stand? The American portions were first published by Humboldt in the fifth volume of his *Examen Critique*. They were not given with great exactness, however, in this copy. The two islands are indicated in their proper position, but only Beata is named. The same mistake in copying was made in the copy of the American portions of the map given in Ghillany's *Ritter Martin Behaim*, to which Humboldt furnished an introduction. Kohl's copy of this celebrated map gives the names of both Alto Velo and Beata, and when we turn to Jomard's *Atlas*, which reproduces the whole map, we find both islands and both names recorded.

Thus we see that upon seventeen maps, eleven of which are dated, ranging over a period of three hundred and sixty-eight years, from the maps of the United States Coast Survey in 1868, when this investigation was made, to the oldest map of the New World made in 1500, or eight years after the first voyage of Columbus, the island of Alto Velo is clearly indicated either by name or by position, and in most cases by both.

Throughout this examination we are struck with one notable feature: that while most of those early maps show a pardonable ignorance of the proper geographical relations of the New World and some of them jumble things together in promiscuous confusion, yet Alto Velo and its mate Beata are put down with remarkable correctness. There is but one place for them and that is adjacent to Cape Beata or de Lobos, on the southern coast of San Domingo, or Hispaniola, as it was originally called.

The position of this island as laid down in these maps is also confirmed by some of the oldest printed chronicles that we have. Thus in Hakluyt's *Voyages*, first published in the year 1599, or two hundred and fifty-seven years before these Baltimore captains discovered Alto Velo, we find minute directions given to the mariner for his voyage from Domingo to New Spain. After giving a course to Puerto Hermoso he says: "Thence you must stirre away south-southwest untill you looke out for Beata and Alto velo. Beata is a small island and not very high. You may passe along the outside thereof and there is no danger but that you may see; and by and by you shall raise Alto velo; and from thence you must stirre away west and by south to give a birth from the islands called Los Frailes or the Friars."

But though we go back to the year 1500 and find the name of Alto Velo on the oldest map of the West Indies known, we have not yet reached the limit of our inquiry. The question at once forces itself upon us: How did Alto Velo get on these maps? Here is an island about three quarters of a mile long and half a mile wide, a mere dot in the Atlantic, and yet it is one of the points which the earliest geographers fixed with a confident iteration and with almost unvarying consent. The solution is not far to seek. We find it in what seems to be the most interesting

and at the same time the most amusing feature of this case. The climax is not reached until we go back to the second voyage of Christopher Columbus and learn that it was a no less distinguished person than the great admiral himself, who discovered this little mote of an island and gave to it the name by which it is still known.

One of the early fruits of the first voyage of Columbus was the discovery of the islands of San Salvador, Cuba, and Hayti. The latter was discovered on the 6th of December, 1492. The cross which Columbus raised on the island on the 12th of December is still shown in the cathedral of San Domingo. A large part of the alluring interest as well as the pathos and tragedy of the first two voyages of Columbus centre in this island, called by the natives Hayti, but to which the Spaniards gave the name of Hispaniola. It was here, on the northern portion of the island, that on the 4th of January, 1493, but a few weeks after its discovery, the admiral built a rude fort and founded his first colony, which out of gratitude for his delivery from shipwreck on Christmas Day, he called *La Navidad*.

It was here that Columbus returned on his second voyage, on the 27th of November, 1493, with a large and well-laden fleet and numerous followers, only to find that the handful of thirty colonists had been exterminated by the savages in reprisal for their cruel and wanton irregularities. It was on Hispaniola that with a broader foundation he established the city of Isabella, the mother of numerous settlements. It was among the mountains of this island that he assiduously conducted his search for gold, and made with all the pomp he could command an expedition into the luxuriant valleys of this land of promise, the narrative of which forms one of the most charming chapters in the captivating pages of Irving.

Returning from this expedition into

the interior, Columbus started on a voyage to the east end of Cuba, during which he discovered the island of Jamaica. After coasting along the south side of Cuba under the delusion that he was on the continent of Asia, he returned to Jamaica and then started east for Hispaniola. On the 19th of August the eastern extreme of Jamaica faded from sight, and on the following day he sighted the long peninsula of Hispaniola known as Cape Tiburon, though the admiral was not aware at first that he was on the southern coast of Hispaniola. During the voyage from Jamaica they encountered boisterous winds and water, and the ships were separated from each other. Proceeding along the coast of Hayti we may imagine the interest which was excited, toward the end of August, when a tall ship under sail was apparently discerned in the distance. Could this be one of the lost vessels of the fleet, or was it some spectre ship upon the ocean? Gradually, however, the illusion vanished, and the tall ship under sail became a single island or lofty rock which rises from the ocean opposite to the long cape at the south of Hayti. To this cape Columbus gave the name of Cape Beata, and from its resemblance to a high sail, called the island *Alto Velo*. Rising five hundred feet from the water this island afforded a fine lookout, and Columbus sent several of his seamen to climb to the top to look for the missing ships. The ships were not to be seen, but the seamen, bent on a voyage of conquest, and not belonging to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, killed eight sea-wolves which were sleeping on the sands. The island seemed to be a favorite roost for many pigeons and birds, and the sailors knocked some of them down with sticks, and took some of them by hand.

There were some things that Columbus and his men did not know. They did not know that the presence of these

flocks of birds, whose ancestors had probably inhabited this island uncounted years before Columbus discovered it, was to invest it with a commercial value in coming centuries. In their eager search for precious metals they did not know that the deposits on this bell-shaped hill could eventually, through the subtle chemistry of commerce, be transmuted into gold. Above all things they were excusably ignorant that this island upon which they had landed was the property of two Baltimore merchants, who were predestined to discover it three hundred and fifty years later.

As we contemplate the audacity of Judge Black in urging the United States government to dispatch a man-of-war to claim this island, we wonder that he did not go a little farther and indignantly indict the sailors of Christopher Columbus for trespass upon property which so clearly belonged to his clients. The time to have employed the army and navy of the United States in regard to Alto Velo was when Columbus and his men invaded it. Unfortunately the United States did not exist at this time, and the great continent of North America had not been rediscovered.

Had Columbus been a Yankee he would not have left Alto Velo without carving his name somewhere on the island during the six days that he anchored by it with his men. The great navigator adopted, however, a more scientific method. He had with him, on this second voyage, a faithful cartographer, Juan de la Cosa, a man who took part in five different expeditions to this continent, two of which he piloted. It is said that Columbus complained that La Cosa boasted that he knew more about the New World than even the admiral. Be this as it may, there is evidence that La Cosa attended to his duties as a chronicler, for when in 1500 he gave to the world the great chart which bears his name, and which Stevens has described as the "most important

and the most authentic geographic monument relating to western discoveries that has come down to us," Alto Velo was faithfully recorded upon it. As Kohl says, and as we have seen by the maps mentioned, it has been put down on nearly every map of importance since that time.

The discovery of Alto Velo substantially as recited is described by Churchill in his *Voyages and Travels*, published in London in 1794; it is found in Herrera, and in the earliest records of the voyages of Columbus.

In his third voyage, Columbus, after having made discoveries on the continent of South America, came again to Alto Velo, anchored under the island of Beata, and communicated with his brother, who was acting as viceroy over the island of Hayti.

If we ask how the title to the island of Alto Velo descended to San Domingo the answer is easy. The regions discovered by Columbus, of which the West Indies were the first fruits, inured to the Spanish government. Hispaniola and its adjacent islands remained in the possession of Spain until 1697, when the French had obtained such a footing on the island that Spain was obliged to surrender the western part to France. By the treaty of 1777 a boundary line was fixed between the French and the Spanish portions. After a varied history which it is unnecessary to relate here, the French portion of the island became the republic of Hayti, and the Spanish portion became, in 1844, the republic of San Domingo. By mutual agreement the historic dividing line was accepted between the two republics, and Alto Velo and Beata were therefore in the territory of San Domingo. The political and historic title of San Domingo to the island seems to be without a flaw.

The evidence I have presented was carefully drawn up by Mr. Seward into a report which, with fac-similes of the

maps consulted, was submitted to the Senate. Judge Black had been previously able to command much support for his claim. But the evidence which Mr. Seward had marshaled against it was so overwhelming that it was completely crushed. There was but one resource left to him. It was to alter the nature of his plea and maintain that "claimants under the act of 1856 acquired title not by the discovery of the island, but by the discovery of the guano!"

The fallacy of this interpretation of the law is apparent to a school-boy. If San Domingo owned this island it could not forfeit it merely by a failure to utilize it. So long as farmer A.'s hens lay their eggs within the limits of that gentleman's property, farmer B. can have no excuse for robbing his neighbor's hen house, or for taking the eggs which he may discover in his neighbor's fields. "Certainly," said Mr. Seward, "the United States do not forfeit by non-use the coal, iron, copper, and gold which are reported as being so profusely distributed throughout the islands and mainland of Alaska."

The claim, therefore, was promptly dismissed by Congress. The failure of President Johnson to support Judge Black caused a coolness to spring up between them, and when the impeachment trial took place Judge Black, although he had previously assisted Johnson in preparing his messages to Congress, declined to become one of his defenders in this crisis.

It is gratifying to reflect that the United States in this controversy had a conscience. Just at the close of the war, with an army so great that this island could not quarter a hundredth part of it, with a navy large enough to encircle it, and powder enough in the national magazines to blow it into meteoric dust, the United States was never in better position, if might made right, to commit such an egregious wrong. Judge Black called the eviction of his clients from

the island a "naked robbery," but what kind of a robbery would it have been if our government had snatched this island from the feeble republic to which it belonged? Not a "naked robbery" indeed, but one clothed in sophistry and shame. The law of conquest gave place to the law of rectitude. It would have been a higher fulfillment of this law if the United States had returned to San Domingo the value of the guano, nine thousand dollars, which its citizens had unwarrantably taken from its treasury.

The Alto Velo case is one of a thousand illustrations of the value which ancient records may acquire in determining not only historic questions, but those of moral and practical importance. We may commend the accuracy and fidelity of *La Cosa* in writing down the name of Alto Velo when Columbus dropped anchor under its shadow; we may commend the accuracy of the long line of chroniclers and cartographers on whose maps and pages the name and situation of this island were correctly indicated; but this fidelity would have been of little use had not the memorials of this labor been as faithfully preserved to us. Through the labors of Dr. Kohl in collecting these maps, the Department of State, in addition to the ancient chronicles which it possessed in its library, had the means within its own archives of showing the unfounded nature of this claim. The six thousand dollars spent for these maps was more than saved to the government in relieving it of the cost of a warlike expedition to San Domingo. And what is of still more importance, it was well spent in relieving the United States of the ignominy and the injustice of robbing a feeble power of an island which was one source of income to its needy treasury.

Seven years more will bring us to the four hundredth anniversary of the



discovery of the New World by Columbus. The anniversary of that event will give a new impulse to historic study, will bring once more vividly before our minds the intrepid courage, the untiring perseverance, the unquenchable faith of the great explorer. We shall brighten

again the jewels on the diadem of his fame. In the dazzling lustre of his great achievements, his humblest discoveries will not be forgotten, and the faithful historian who shall write for us again the story of his second voyage will number *Alto Velo* among them.

*S. J. Barrows.*



## THE NEW PORTFOLIO.

### XVII.

#### DR. BUTTS'S PATIENT.

THE physician found Maurice just regaining his heat after a chill of a somewhat severe character. He knew too well what this meant, and the probable series of symptoms of which it was the prelude. His patient was not the only one in the neighborhood who was attacked in this way. The autumnal fevers to which our country towns are subject, in the place of those "agues," or intermittents, so largely prevalent in the South and West, were already beginning, and Maurice, who had exposed himself in the early and late hours of the dangerous season, must be expected to go through the regular stages of this always serious and not rarely fatal disease.

Paolo, his faithful servant, would fain have taken the sole charge of his master during his illness. But the doctor insisted that he must have a nurse to help him in his task, which was likely to be long and exhausting.

At the mention of the word "nurse" Paolo turned white, and exclaimed in an agitated and thoroughly frightened way, "No! no nuss! no woman! She kill him! I stay by him day and night, but don't let no woman come near him, — if you do, he die!"

The doctor explained that he intended

to send a *man* who was used to taking care of sick people, and with no little effort at last succeeded in convincing Paolo that, as he could not be awake day and night for a fortnight or three weeks, it was absolutely necessary to call in some assistance from without. And so Mr. Maurice Kirkwood was to play the leading part in that drama of nature's composing called a typhoid fever, with its regular bedchamber scenery, its properties of phials and pill-boxes, its little company of stock actors, its gradual evolution of a very simple plot, its familiar incidents, its emotional alternations, and its denouement, sometimes tragic, oftener happy.

It is needless to say that the sympathies of all the good people of the village, residents and strangers, were actively awakened for the young man about whom they knew so little and conjectured so much. Tokens of their kindness came to him daily: flowers from the woods and from the gardens; choice fruit grown in the open air or under glass, for there were some fine houses surrounded by well-kept grounds, and greenhouses and graperies were not unknown in the small but favored settlement.

On all these luxuries Maurice looked with dull and languid eyes. A faint smile of gratitude sometimes struggled through the stillness of his features, or a murmured word of thanks found its

way through his parched lips, and he would relapse into the partial stupor or the fitful sleep in which, with intervals of slight wandering, the slow hours dragged along the sluggish days one after another. With no violent symptoms, but with steady persistency, the disease moved on in its accustomed course. It was at no time immediately threatening, but the experienced physician knew its uncertainties only too well. He had known fever patients suddenly seized with violent internal inflammation, and carried off with frightful rapidity. He remembered the case of a convalescent, a young woman who had been attacked while in apparently vigorous general health, who, on being lifted too suddenly to a sitting position, while still confined to her bed, fainted, and in a few moments ceased to breathe. It may well be supposed that he took every possible precaution to avert the accidents which tend to throw from its track a disease the regular course of which is arranged by nature as carefully as the route of a railroad from one city to another. The most natural interpretation which the common observer would put upon the manifestations of one of these autumnal maladies would be that some noxious combustible element had found its way into the system which must be burned to ashes before the heat which pervades the whole body can subside. Sometimes the fire may smoulder and seem as if it were going out, or were quite extinguished, and again it will find some new material to seize upon and flame up as fiercely as ever. Its coming on most frequently at the season when the brush fires which are consuming the dead branches, and withered leaves, and all the refuse of vegetation are sending up their smoke is suggestive. Sometimes it seems as if the body, relieved of its effete materials, renewed its youth after one of these quiet, expurgating, internal fractional cremations. Lean, pallid students have found them-

selves plump and blooming, and it has happened that one whose hair was straight as that of an Indian has been startled to behold himself in his mirror with a fringe of hyacinthine curls about his rejuvenated countenance.

There was nothing of what medical men call malignity in the case of Maurice Kirkwood. The most alarming symptom was a profound prostration, which at last reached such a point that he lay utterly helpless, as unable to move without aid as the feeblest of paralytics. In this state he lay for many days, not suffering pain, but with the sense of great weariness, and the feeling that he should never rise from his bed again. For the most part his intellect was unclouded when his attention was aroused. He spoke only in whispers, a few words at a time. The doctor felt sure, by the expression which passed over his features from time to time, that something was worrying and oppressing him, something which he wished to communicate, and had not the force, or the tenacity of purpose, to make perfectly clear. His eyes often wandered to a certain desk, and once he had found strength to lift his emaciated arm and point to it. The doctor went towards it as if to fetch it to him, but he slowly shook his head. He had not the power to say at that time what he wished. The next day he felt a little less prostrated and succeeded in explaining to the doctor what he wanted. His words, so far as the physician could make them out, were these which follow. Dr. Butts looked upon them as possibly expressing wishes which would be his last, and noted them down carefully immediately after leaving his chamber.

"I commit the secret of my life to your charge. My whole story is told in a paper locked in that desk. The key is — put your hand under my pillow. If I die, let the story be known. It will show that I was — human — and save my memory from reproach."

He was silent for a little time. A single tear stole down his hollow cheek. The doctor turned his head away, for his own eyes were full. But he said to himself, "It is a good sign; I begin to feel strong hopes that he will recover."

Maurice spoke once more. "Doctor, I put full trust in you. You are wise and kind. Do what you will with this paper, but open it at once and read. I want you to know the story of my life before it is finished — if the end is at hand. Take it with you and read it before you sleep." He was exhausted and presently his eyes closed, but the doctor saw a tranquil look on his features which added encouragement to his hopes.

### XVIII.

#### MAURICE KIRKWOOD'S STORY OF HIS LIFE.

I am an American by birth, but a large part of my life has been passed in foreign lands. My father was a man of education, possessed of an ample fortune; my mother was considered a very accomplished and amiable woman. I was their first and only child. She died while I was yet an infant. If I remember her at all it is as a vision, more like a glimpse of a pre-natal existence than as a part of my earthly life. At the death of my mother I was left in the charge of the old nurse who had enjoyed her perfect confidence. She was devoted to me, and I became absolutely dependent on her, who had for me all the love and all the care of a mother. I was naturally the object of the attentions and caresses of the family relatives. I have been told that I was a pleasant, smiling infant, with nothing to indicate any peculiar nervous susceptibility; not afraid of strangers, but on the contrary ready to make their acquaintance. My father was devoted to me and did all in his power to promote my health and comfort.

I was still a babe, often carried in arms, when the event happened which changed my whole future and destined me to a strange and lonely existence. I cannot relate it even now without a sense of terror. I must force myself to recall the circumstances as told me and vaguely remembered, for I am not willing that my doomed and wholly exceptional life should pass away unrecorded, unexplained, unvindicated. My nature is, I feel sure, a kind and social one, but I have lived apart, as if my heart were filled with hatred of my fellow-creatures. If there are any readers who look without pity, without sympathy, upon those who shun the fellowship of their fellow men and women, who show by their downcast or averted eyes that they dread companionship and long for solitude, I pray them, if this paper ever reaches them, to stop at this point. Follow me no further, for you will not believe my story, nor enter into the feelings which I am about to reveal. But if there are any to whom all that is human is of interest, who have felt in their own consciousness some stirrings of invincible attraction to one individual and equally invincible repugnance to another, who know by their own experience that elective affinities have as their necessary counterpart, and, as it were, their polar opposites, currents not less strong of elective repulsions, let them read with unquestioning faith the story of a blighted life I am about to relate, much of it, of course, received from the lips of others.

My cousin Laura, a girl of seventeen, lately returned from Europe, was considered eminently beautiful. It was in my second summer that she visited my father's house, where he was living with his servants and my old nurse, my mother having but recently left him a widow. Laura was full of vivacity, impulsive, quick in her movements, thoughtless occasionally, as it is not strange that a young girl of her age should be.

It was a beautiful summer day when she saw me for the first time. My nurse was carrying me in her arms, walking back and forward on a balcony with a low railing, upon which opened the windows of the second story of my father's house. While the nurse was thus carrying me, Laura came suddenly upon the balcony. She no sooner saw me than with all the delighted eagerness of her youthful nature she rushed toward me, and, taking me suddenly from the nurse's arms, began tossing me after the fashion of young girls who have been so lately playing with dolls that they feel as if babies were very much of the same nature. The sudden seizure frightened me, I sprang from her arms in my terror, and fell over the railing of the balcony. I should probably enough have been killed on the spot but for the fact that a low thorn-bush grew just beneath the balcony, into which I fell and thus had the violence of the shock broken. But the thorns tore my tender flesh, and I carry to this day marks of the deep wounds they inflicted.

That dreadful experience is burned deep into my memory. The sudden apparition of the girl; the sense of being torn away from the protecting arms around me; the frantic effort to escape; the shriek that followed me as I fell through what must have seemed unmeasurable space; the cruel lacerations of the piercing and rending thorns; all these fearful impressions blended in one paralyzing terror.

When I was taken up I was thought to be dead. I was perfectly white, and the physician who saw me almost immediately after my fall said that no pulse was perceptible. But after a time consciousness returned; the wounds, though painful, were none of them dangerous, and the most alarming effects of the accident passed away. My old nurse cared for me tenderly day and night, and my father, who had been almost distracted in the first hours which

followed the injury, hoped and believed that no permanent evil results would be found to follow it. My cousin Laura was naturally deeply distressed to feel that her thoughtlessness had been the cause of so grave an accident. As soon as I had somewhat recovered she came to see me, very penitent, very anxious to make me forget the alarm she had caused me, with all its consequences. I was in the nursery sitting up in my bed, bandaged, but not in any pain, as it seemed, for I was quiet and to all appearance in a perfectly natural state of feeling. As Laura came near me I shrieked and suddenly changed color. I put my hand upon my heart as if I had been stabbed, and fell over, unconscious. It was very much the same state as that in which I was found immediately after my fall.

The cause of this violent and sudden seizure was but too obvious. The approach of the young girl and the dread that she was about to lay her hand upon me had called up the same train of effects which the moment of terror and pain had already occasioned. The old nurse saw this in a moment. "Go! go!" she cried to Laura,—"go, or the child will die!" Her command did not have to be repeated. After Laura had gone I lay senseless, white and cold as marble, for some time. The doctor soon came, and by the use of smart rubbing and stimulants the color came back slowly to my cheeks and the arrested circulation was again set in motion.

It was hard to believe that this was anything more than a temporary effect of the accident. There could be little doubt, it was thought by the doctor and by my father, that after a few days I should recover from this morbid sensibility and receive my cousin as other infants receive pleasant-looking young persons. The old nurse shook her head. "The girl will be the death of the child," she said, "if she touches him or comes near him. His heart stopped

beating just as when the girl snatched him out of my arms, and he fell over the balcony railing." Once more the experiment was tried, cautiously, almost insidiously. The same alarming consequences followed. It was too evident that a chain of nervous disturbances had been set up in my system which repeated itself whenever the original impression gave the first impulse. I never saw my cousin Laura after this last trial. Its result had so distressed her that she never ventured again to show herself to me.

If the effect of the nervous shock had stopped there, it would have been a misfortune for my cousin and myself, but hardly a calamity. The world is wide, and a cousin or two more or less can hardly be considered an essential of existence. I often heard Laura's name mentioned, but never by any one who was acquainted with all the circumstances, for it was noticed that I changed color and caught at my breast as if I wanted to grasp my heart in my hand whenever that fatal name was mentioned.

Alas! this was not all. While I was suffering from the effects of my fall among the thorns I was attended by my old nurse, assisted by another old woman, by a physician, and my father, who would take his share in caring for me. It was thought best to keep me perfectly quiet, and strangers and friends were alike excluded from my nursery, with one exception, that my old grandmother came in now and then. With her it seems that I was somewhat timid and shy, following her with rather anxious eyes, as if not quite certain whether or not she was dangerous. But one day, when I was far advanced towards recovery, my father brought in a young lady, a relative of his, who had expressed a great desire to see me. She was, as I have been told, a very handsome young person, of about the same age as my cousin Laura, but bearing no personal

resemblance to her in form, features, or complexion. She had no sooner entered the room than the same sudden changes which had followed my cousin's visit began to show themselves, and before she had reached my bedside I was in a state of deadly collapse, as on the occasions already mentioned.

Some time passed before any recurrence of these terrifying seizures. A little girl of five or six years old was allowed to come into the nursery one day and bring me some flowers. I took them from her hand, but turned away and shut my eyes. There was no seizure, but there was a certain dread and aversion, nothing more than a feeling which it might be hoped that time would overcome. Those around me were gradually finding out the circumstances which brought on the deadly attack to which I was subject.

The daughter of one of our near neighbors was considered the prettiest girl of the village where we were passing the summer. She was very anxious to see me, and as I was now nearly well it was determined that she should be permitted to pay me a short visit. I had always delighted in seeing her and being caressed by her. I was sleeping when she entered the nursery and came and took a seat at my side in perfect silence. Presently I became restless, and a moment later I opened my eyes and saw her stooping over me. My hand went to my left breast, — the color faded from my cheeks, — I was again the cold marble image so like death that it had well-nigh been mistaken for it.

Could it be possible that the fright which had chilled my blood had left me with an unconquerable fear of woman at the period when she is most attractive not only to adolescents, but to children of tender age, who feel the fascination of her flowing locks, her bright eyes, her blooming cheeks, and that mysterious magnetism of sex which draws all life into its warm and potently vitalized

atmosphere? So it did indeed seem. The dangerous experiment could not be repeated indefinitely. It was not intentionally tried again, but accident brought about more than one renewal of it during the following years, until it became fully recognized that I was the unhappy subject of a mortal dread of woman,—not absolutely of the human female, for I had no fear of my old nurse or of my grandmother, or of any old wrinkled face, and I had become accustomed to the occasional meeting of a little girl or two, whom I nevertheless regarded with a certain ill-defined feeling that there was danger in their presence. I was sent to a boys' school very early, and during the first ten or twelve years of my life I had rarely any occasion to be reminded of my strange idiosyncrasy.

As I grew out of boyhood into youth, a change came over the feelings which had so long held complete possession of me. This was what my father and his advisers had always anticipated, and was the ground of their confident hope in my return to natural conditions before I should have grown to mature manhood.

How shall I describe the conflicts of those dreamy, bewildering, dreadful years? Visions of loveliness haunted me sleeping and waking. Sometimes a graceful girlish figure would so draw my eyes towards it that I lost sight of all else, and was ready to forget all my fears and find myself at her side, like other youths by the side of young maidens,—happy in their cheerful companionship, while I,—I, under the curse of one blighting moment, looked on, hopeless. Sometimes the glimpse of a fair face or the tone of a sweet voice stirred within me all the instincts that make the morning of life beautiful to adolescence. I reasoned with myself:—

Why should I not have outgrown that idle apprehension which had been the nightmare of my earlier years? Why should not the rising tide of life have

drowned out the feeble growths that infested the shallows of childhood? How many children there are who tremble at being left alone in the dark, but who, a few years later, will smile at their foolish terrors and brave all the ghosts of a haunted chamber! Why should I any longer be the slave of a foolish fancy that has grown into a half insane habit of mind? I was familiarly acquainted with all the stories of the strange antipathies and invincible repugnances to which others, some of them famous men, had been subject. I said to myself, Why should not I overcome this dread of woman as Peter the Great fought down his dread of wheels rolling over a bridge? Was I, alone of all mankind, to be doomed to perpetual exclusion from the society which, as it seemed to me, was all that rendered existence worth the trouble and fatigue of slavery to the vulgar need of supplying the waste of the system and working at the task of respiration like the daughters of Danaus,—toiling day and night as the worn-out sailor labors at the pump of his sinking vessel?

Why did I not brave the risk of meeting squarely, and without regard to any possible danger, some one of those fair maidens whose far-off smile, whose graceful movements, at once attracted and agitated me? I can only answer this question to the satisfaction of any really inquiring reader by giving him the true interpretation of the singular phenomenon of which I was the subject. For this I shall have to refer to a paper of which I have made a copy, and which will be found included with this manuscript. It is enough to say here, without entering into the explanation of the fact, which will be found simple enough as seen by the light of modern physiological science, that the "nervous disturbance" which the presence of a woman in the flower of her age produced in my system was a *sense of impending death*, sudden, overwhelming, uncon-



querable, appalling. It was a reversed action of the nervous centres, — the opposite of that which flushes the young lover's cheek and hurries his bounding pulses as he comes into the presence of the object of his passion. No one who has ever felt the sensation can have failed to recognize it as an imperative summons, which commands instant and terrified submission.

It was at this period of my life that my father determined to try the effect of travel and residence in different localities upon my bodily and mental condition. I say bodily as well as mental, for I was too slender for my height and subject to some nervous symptoms which were a cause of anxiety. That the mind was largely concerned in these there was no doubt, but the mutual interactions of mind and body are often too complex to admit of satisfactory analysis. Each is in part cause and each also in part effect.

We passed some years in Italy, chiefly in Rome, where I was placed in a school conducted by priests, and where of course I met only those of my own sex. There I had the opportunity of seeing the influences under which certain young Catholics, destined for the priesthood, are led to separate themselves from all communion with the sex associated in their minds with the most subtle dangers to which the human soul can be exposed. I became in some degree reconciled to the thought of exclusion from the society of women by seeing around me so many who were self-devoted to celibacy. The thought sometimes occurred to me whether I should not find the best and the only natural solution of the problem of existence, as submitted to myself, in taking upon me the vows which settle the whole question and raise an impassable barrier between the devotee and the object of his dangerous attraction.

How often I talked this whole matter over with the young priest who was at

once my special instructor and my favorite companion! But accustomed as I had become to the forms of the Roman Church, and impressed as I was with the purity and excellence of many of its young members with whom I was acquainted, my early training rendered it impossible for me to accept the credentials which it offered me as authoritative. My friend and instructor had to set me down as a case of "invincible ignorance." This was the loop-hole through which he crept out of the prison-house of his creed, and was enabled to look upon me without the feeling of absolute despair with which his sterner brethren would, I fear, have regarded me.

I have said that accident exposed me at times to the influence which I had such reasons for dreading. Here is one example of such an occurrence, which I relate as simply as possible, vividly as it is impressed upon my memory. A young friend whose acquaintance I had made in Rome asked me one day to come to his rooms and look at a cabinet of gems and medals which he had collected. I had been but a short time in his library when a vague sense of uneasiness came over me. My heart became restless, — I could feel it stirring irregularly, as if it were some frightened creature caged in my breast. There was nothing that I could see to account for it. A door was partly open, but not so that I could see into the next room. The feeling grew upon me of some influence which was paralyzing my circulation. I begged my friend to open a window. As he did so, the door swung in the draught and I saw a blooming young woman, — it was my friend's sister, who had been sitting with a book in her hand, and who rose at the opening of the door. Something had warned me of the presence of a woman, — that occult and potent *aura* of individuality, call it personal magnetism, spiritual effluence, or reduce it to a simpler

expression if you will; whatever it was, it had warned me of the nearness of the dread attraction which allured at a distance and revealed itself with all the terrors of the *lorelei* if approached too recklessly. A sign from her brother caused her to withdraw at once, but not before I had felt the impression which betrayed itself in my change of color, anxiety about the region of the heart, and sudden failure as if about to fall in a deadly fainting-fit.

Does all this seem strange and incredible to the reader of my manuscript? Nothing in the history of life is so strange or exceptional as it seems to those who have not made a long study of its mysteries. I have never known just such a case as my own, and yet there must have been such, and if the whole history of mankind were unfolded I cannot doubt that there have been many like it. Let my reader suspend his judgment until he has read the paper I have referred to, which was drawn up by a Committee of the Royal Academy of the Biological Sciences. In this paper the mechanism of the series of nervous derangements to which I have been subject since the fatal shock experienced in my infancy is explained in language not hard to understand. It will be seen that such a change of polarity in the nervous centres is only a permanent form and an extreme degree of an emotional disturbance, which as a temporary and comparatively unimportant personal accident is far from being uncommon, — is so frequent in fact that every one must have known instances of it, and not a few must have had more or less serious experiences of it in their own private history.

It must not be supposed that my imagination dealt with me as I am now dealing with the reader. I was full of strange fancies and wild superstitions. One of my Catholic friends gave me a silver medal which had been blessed by the Pope, and which I was to wear next

my body. I was told that this would turn black after a time, in virtue of a power which it possessed of drawing out original sin, or certain portions of it, together with the evil and morbid tendencies which had been engrafted on the corrupt nature. I wore the medal faithfully, as directed, and watched it carefully. It became tarnished and after a time darkened, but it wrought no change in my unnatural condition.

There was an old gypsy who had the reputation of knowing more of futurity than she had any right to know. The story was that she had foretold the assassination of Count Rossi and the death of Cavour. However that may have been, I was persuaded to let her try her black art upon my future. I shall never forget the strange, wild look of the wrinkled hag as she took my hand and studied its lines and fixed her wicked old eyes on my young countenance. After this examination she shook her head and muttered some words, which as nearly as I could get them would be in English like these: —

Fair lady cast a spell on thee,  
Fair lady's hand shall set thee free.

Strange as it may seem, these words of a withered old creature, whose palm had to be crossed with silver to bring forth her oracular response, have always clung to my memory as if they were destined to fulfilment. The extraordinary nature of the affliction to which I was subject disposed me to believe the incredible with reference to all that relates to it. I have never ceased to have the feeling that, sooner or later, I should find myself freed from the blight laid upon me in my infancy. It seems as if it would naturally come through the influence of some young and fair woman, to whom that merciful errand should be assigned by the Providence that governs our destiny. With strange hopes, with trembling fears, with mingled belief and doubt, wherever I have found myself I have sought with longing yet half avert-

ed eyes for the "elect lady," as I have learned to call her, who was to lift the curse from my ruined life.

Three times I have been led to the hope, if not the belief, that I had found the object of my superstitious belief. Singularly enough it was always on the water that the phantom of my hope appeared before my bewildered vision. Once it was an English girl who was a fellow passenger with me in one of my ocean voyages. I need not say that she was beautiful, for she was my dream realized. I heard her singing, I saw her walking the deck on some of the fair days when sea-sickness was forgotten. The passengers were a social company enough, but I had kept myself apart, as was my wont. At last the attraction became too strong to resist any longer. "I will venture into the charmed circle if it kills me," I said to my father. I did venture, and it did not kill me, or I should not be telling this story. But there was a repetition of the old experiences. I need not relate the series of alarming consequences of my venture. The English girl was very lovely, and I have no doubt has made some one supremely happy before this, but she was not the "elect lady" of the prophecy and of my dreams.

A second time I thought myself for a moment in the presence of the destined deliverer who was to restore me to my natural place among my fellow men and women. It was on the Tiber that I met the young maiden who drew me once more into that inner circle which surrounded young womanhood with deadly peril for me, if I dared to pass its limits. I was floating with the stream in the little boat in which I passed many long hours of reverie when I saw another small boat with a boy and a young girl in it. The boy had been rowing, and one of his oars had slipped from his grasp. He did not know how to paddle with a single oar and was hopelessly rowing round and round, his oar

all the time floating farther away from him. I could not refuse my assistance. I picked up the oar and brought my skiff alongside of the boat. When I handed the oar to the boy the young girl lifted her veil and thanked me in the exquisite music of the language which

"Sounds as if it should be writ on satin."

She was a type of Italian beauty — a *nocturne* in flesh and blood, if I may borrow a term certain artists are fond of, but it was her voice which captivated me and for a moment made me believe that I was no longer shut off from all relations with the social life of my race. An hour later I was found lying insensible on the floor of my boat, white, cold, almost pulseless. It cost much patient labor to bring me back to consciousness. Had not such extreme efforts been made, it seems probable that I should never have waked from a slumber which was hardly distinguishable from that of death.

Why should I provoke a catastrophe which appears inevitable if I invite it by exposing myself to its too well ascertained cause? The habit of these deadly seizures has become a second nature. The strongest and the ablest men have found it impossible to resist the impression produced by the most insignificant object, by the most harmless sight or sound to which they had a congenital or acquired antipathy. What prospect have I of ever being rid of this long and deep seated infirmity? I may well ask myself these questions, but my answer is that I will never give up the hope that time will yet bring its remedy. It may be that the wild prediction which so haunts me shall find itself fulfilled. I have had of late strange premonitions, to which if I were superstitious I could not help giving heed. But I have seen too much of the faith that deals in miracles to accept the supernatural in any shape — assuredly when it comes from an old witch-like creature who takes pay for her revelations of the future. Be

it so: though I am not superstitious, I have a right to be imaginative, and my imagination will hold to those words of the old zingara with an irresistible feeling that, sooner or later, they will prove true.

Can it be possible that her prediction is not far from its realization? I have had both waking and sleeping visions within these last months and weeks which have taken possession of me and filled my life with new thoughts, new hopes, new resolves.

Sometimes on the bosom of the lake by which I am dreaming away this season of bloom and fragrance, sometimes in the fields or woods at a distant glimpse, once in a nearer glance, which left me pale and tremulous, yet was followed by a swift reaction, so that my cheeks flushed and my pulse bounded, I have seen her who — how do I dare to tell it so that my own eyes can read it? — I cannot help believing is to be my deliverer, my saviour.

I have been warned in the most solemn and impressive language by the experts most deeply read in the laws of life and the history of its disturbing and destroying influences, that it would be at the imminent risk of my existence if I should expose myself to the repetition of my former experiences. I was reminded that unexplained sudden deaths were of constant, of daily occurrence; that any emotion is liable to arrest the movements of life: terror, joy, good news or bad news, — anything that reaches the deeper nervous centres. I had already died once, as Sir Charles Napier said of himself; yes, more than once, died and been resuscitated. The next time, I might very probably fail to get my return ticket after my visit to Hades. It was a rather grim stroke of humor, but I understood its meaning full well, and felt the force of its menace.

After all, what had I to live for if the great primal instinct which strives to make whole the half life of lonely

manhood is defeated, suppressed, crushed out of existence? Why not as well die in the attempt to break up a wretched servitude to a perverted nervous movement as in any other way? I am alone in the world, — alone save for my faithful servant, through whom I seem to hold to the human race as it were by a single filament. My father, who was my instructor, my companion, my dearest and best friend through all my later youth and my earlier manhood, died three years ago and left me my own master, with the means of living as might best please my fancy. This season shall decide my fate. One more experiment, and I shall find myself restored to my place among my fellow-beings, or, as I devoutly hope, in a sphere where, consciously or unconsciously, all our mortal infirmities are past and forgotten.

I have told the story of a blighted life without reserve, so that there shall not remain any mystery or any dark suspicion connected with my memory if I should be taken away unexpectedly. It has cost me an effort to do it, but now that my life is on record I feel more reconciled to my lot, with all its possibilities, — and among these possibilities is a gleam of a better future. I have been told by my advisers, some of them wise, deeply instructed, and kind-hearted men that such a life-destiny should be related by the subject of it for the instruction of others, and especially for the light it throws on certain peculiarities of human character often wrongly interpreted as due to moral perversion, when they are in reality the results of misdirected or reversed actions in some of the closely connected nervous centres.

For myself I can truly say that I have very little morbid sensibility left with reference to the destiny which has been allotted to me. I have passed through different stages of feeling with reference to it, as I have developed from infancy to manhood. At first it was

mere blind instinct about which I had no thought, living like other infants the life of impressions without language to connect them in series. In my boyhood I began to be deeply conscious of the infirmity which separated me from those around me. In youth began that conflict of emotions and impulses with the antagonistic influence of which I have already spoken, a conflict which has never ceased, but to which I have necessarily become to a certain degree accustomed, and against the dangers of which I have learned to guard myself habitually. That is the meaning of my isolation. You, young man, — if at any time your eyes shall look upon my melancholy record, — you at least will understand me. Does not your heart throb, in the presence of budding or blooming womanhood, sometimes as if it “were ready to crack” with its own excess of strain? What if instead of throbbing it should falter, flutter, and stop as if never to beat again? You, young woman, who with ready belief and tender sympathy will look upon these pages, if they are ever spread before you, know what it is when your breast heaves with uncontrollable emotion and the grip of the bodice seems unendurable as the embrace of the iron virgin of the Inquisition. Think what it would be if the grasp were tightened so that no breath of air could enter your panting chest!

Does your heart beat in the same way, young man, when your honored friend, a venerable matron of seventy years, greets you with her kindly smile, as it does in the presence of youthful loveliness? When a pretty child brings you her doll and looks into your eyes with artless grace and trustful simplicity, does your pulse quicken, do you tremble, does life palpitate through your whole being as when the maiden of seventeen meets your enamored sight in the glow of her rosebud beauty? Wonder not, then, if the period of mystic attraction for you should be that of agitation,

terror, danger to one in whom the natural current of the instincts has had its course changed as that of a stream is changed by a convulsion of nature, so that the impression which is new life to you is death to him.

I am now twenty-five years old. I have reached the time of life which I have dreamed, nay even ventured to hope, might be the limit of the sentence which was pronounced upon me in my infancy. I can assign no good reason for this anticipation. But in writing this paper I feel as if I were preparing to begin a renewed existence. There is nothing for me to be ashamed of in the story I have told. There is no man living who would not have yielded to the sense of instantly impending death which seized upon me under the conditions I have mentioned. Martyrs have gone singing to their flaming shrouds, but never a man could hold his breath long enough to kill himself; he must have rope or water, or some mechanical help, or nature will make him draw in a breath of air, and would make him do so though he knew the salvation of the human race would be forfeited by that one gasp.

This paper may never reach the eye of any one afflicted in the same way that I have been. It probably never will, but for all that, there are many shy natures which will recognize tendencies in themselves in the direction of my unhappy susceptibility. Others, to whom such weakness seems inconceivable, will find their skepticism shaken, if not removed, by the calm, judicial statement of the Report drawn up for the Royal Academy. It will make little difference to me whether my story is accepted unhesitatingly or looked upon as largely a product of the imagination. I am but a bird of passage that lights on the boughs of different nationalities. I belong to no flock; my home may be among the palms of Syria, the olives of Italy, the oaks of England, the elms

that shadow the Hudson or the Connecticut; I build no nest; to-day I am here, to-morrow on the wing.

If I quit my native land before the trees have dropped their leaves I shall place this manuscript in the safe hands of one whom I feel sure that I can trust, to do with it as he shall see fit. If it is only curious and has no bearing on human welfare, he may think it well to let it remain unread until I shall have passed away. If in his judgment it throws any light on one of the deeper mysteries of our nature — the repulsions which play such a formidable part in social life, and which must be recognized as the correlatives of the affinities that distribute the individuals governed by them in the face of impediments which

seem to be impossibilities — then it may be freely given to the world.

But if I am here when the leaves are all fallen, the programme of my life will have changed, and this story of the dead past will be illuminated by the light of a living present which will irradiate all its saddening features. Who would not pray that my last gleam of light and hope may be that of dawn and not of departing day?

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The reader who finds it hard to accept the reality of a story so far from the common range of experience is once more requested to suspend his judgment until he has read the paper which will next be offered for his consideration.

*Oliver Wendell Holmes.*

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## MONDAMIN.

"First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear."

THE original habitat of maize, or Indian corn, was long a vexed question among naturalists, many of whom regarded this useful cereal as the gift of the Orient. Some maintained that it is identical with the corn of the Scriptures; others, relying on the testimony afforded by some drawings in an ancient Chinese work on natural history, inferred that the plant is of Chinese origin; still others were deceived by an ingenious forgery purporting to be a thirteenth-century document, the so-called Charter of Incisa, in which mention is made of a "kind of seed of a golden color and partly white," brought from Anatolia by crusaders. The theory of an Egyptian origin was fortified by the finding of an ear of maize in a Theban sarcophagus (since ascertained to have been surreptitiously placed there by an Arab). The dis-

tinguished naturalist, Alphonse de Candolle, reviewing the subject in his *Origin of Cultivated Plants*, is satisfied that maize did not proceed from the East. On the confusion of names which have been applied to this plant, he observes that "maize is called in Lorraine and in the Vosges Roman corn; in Tuscany, Sicilian corn; in Sicily, Indian corn; in the Pyrenees, Spanish corn; in Provence, Barbary or Guinea corn. The Turks call it Egyptian corn, and the Egyptians Syrian *dourra*." The French name, Turkish wheat, he supposes to have been fostered by the fancied resemblance of the tufted ears to the beard of the Turk, or "by the vigor of the plant, which may have given rise to an expression similar to the French *fort comme un turc*." He is convinced that maize is of American origin, and assigns, as its possible earliest home, the tableland of Bogota, anciently inhabited by a people of con-



siderable agricultural civilization, from whom the plant may have been derived by both Peruvian and Mexican. Certain it is that the tombs of these people frequently contain ears of maize, a fact which indicates that the plant was closely connected with the religious ceremonies of ancient America. Added to this evidence, Darwin found ears of Indian corn buried in the sand of the Peruvian coast eighty-five feet above sea-level.

Our national escutcheon displays an eagle. Now, if it were required to choose an emblem from the vegetable kingdom to bespeak the hope and hardihood of the New World, where would the selection fall? The plant to be promoted to the place of honor must possess the virtue of accommodation, growing readily north, south, east, and west; be notable for its fruitfulness; a right-hand reliance of the pioneer; above all, it must be an immemorial occupant of the soil. The Western continent has produced the potato, the pumpkin, and the tobacco plant; also maize. The first, prone in its ways, and fruiting subterraneously, would do wrong to our national genius; the second, a golden braggart, with its earth-embracing habits, — afar be its suggestion! The third would but conjure up a vision of Columbia, lapped in nicotian haze and vagaries, inviting the nations to smoke with her! There remains only the maize, and how can we do better than to adopt as our armorial device the Indian's own plant? Behold the blonde plume-waving stranger, whom first the fasting Hiawatha wrestled with, overcame, and gave due rites of burial, — Mondamin, fort comme un turc, yet noble in his bearing; urbane and gentle, though a savage! No other species in the list of cultivated cereals appears to such good advantage, in the isolated individual. A single full-grown plant of Indian corn, though but a fleeting, annual growth, possesses presence and dig-

nity no less than does the oak itself. It stands erect, poised, sufficient, its green blades sweeping right and left in the curve of beauty, and ready at the wind's excitation to engage in a mock battle of scythes with its neighbors.

But we are over-hasty. Mondamin must first be laid under ground. Yearly we bury the handsome youth, who soon springs up and helps to make the yet unwritten history of the rural summer. Though we have made undoubted improvements in this direction, it is not uninteresting to learn how his obsequies were conducted in remote times. "The Indian method of planting corn was to make a conical hillock, in the top of which the corn was placed; and being used repeatedly for the same purpose, these hills became so hard that they have, in some old fields, lasted till to-day. In some places in Michigan a heavy growth of maple has sprung up since, and yet the old corn-hills are clearly marked." Still Mondamin enjoins it upon his conquerors to watch his grave. As of old, the body-snatchers are abroad, — "Kahgahgee, the King of Ravens," and his "black marauders!" Nor does that connecting link between genus homo and hobgoblin, the scarecrow, avail to stay the miscreants; even making an example of Kahgahgee, by suspending his dead body from a pole in the midst of the field, scarcely checks the pillage. That which was planted one day frequently *comes up* by the next. Nor are the crow and the blackbird alone in evil-doing, but are reinforced by the chipmunk, a brownie that harvests untimely. Tame ducks, also, have been known to exercise a stealthy ingenuity, with their bills probing the ground diagonally until the kernel was reached and snapped off, leaving the tender shoot above ground to wither without apparent cause. The farmer's best resort against the horde of feathered trespassers seems to be a boy with a shot-gun. Unless it were Min-

nehaha's magic circle, no way of blessing the cornfields so effectual as this!

First the blade. It must be an eye indifferent to contrast in color that will not take distinct delight in those little pennons of sunshiny green, fluttering above the rich umber of the soil, and signaling the welcome intelligence, "Corn is up." Every stage of its growth, as in the life of some lovely child, is interesting and repays attention, from the time when its blades, clasping the stalk, first form chalices to hold the rain, to its midsummer pride of twofold flowerage, yellow or brownish tassel above, and flowing silk below. What strides of growth it makes from evening to the next day's light! A sly, silent bacchanal, it gets drunk upon the dew every blessed night. By and by, it is seen standing on tiptoe; toes white, or, sometimes, prettily roseate. (The farmer, I am bound to say, sees only "brace-roots," the botanist only "aerial roots," extending from the first joint of the stalk downward until they fasten themselves in the soil: yet it will be evident to one who makes corn a sympathetic study that it stands a-tiptoe, out of pure good spirits and valiance.) Its leaf, closely scanned, shows, not one uniform green, but streakings of paler and deeper color. Hold the blade between you and the light, and you will see on each side of the strong, straight midrib an equal number of lucid hair-line channelings. The upper surface is roughish, being set with minute hairs; the under surface is of a cool smoothness. A day of "ninety in the shade" tells upon the leaves, causing them to curl their margins upward, as though to shut out the glare of the sun; but the night does not fail to bring restoration.

I listen to the whisper of corn-blades, and seem to receive hint of a mysterious council held by Mondamin and his fellow-braves. In what idiom of Cherokee, or Chippeway, or Sioux, do they converse? Or, for utmost secrecy, do

they employ some one of the Indian dead languages? If we studiously attend to their conversation, we shall perhaps learn some word or phrase to which even the learned Eliot did not possess the key. On still, hot days, when not a lisp of sound proceeds from these balanced sickle blades, a musical contralto murmur goes through the field, reminding one of the orchard's audible reverie in May. The bees are humming at their work among the tassels, or staminate flowers, of the corn. Each laborer flies away with a good packful of yellow pollen, the substance of bee-bread, or, more properly speaking, of bee johnny-cake, sweet and wholesome, made from the fine bolted meal of the flower, whereas, later on, our own cake will be made of the coarser grist of the kernel. Perhaps it is the scent of the blossoms which attracts the bees, for the corn-blossom possesses a fragrance as characteristic as that of the clover-bloom, — a homely, hearty sweetness, food-promising.

We shall scarcely find a fairer midsummer picture, more of the spirit which broods in the midsummer fields, or more of the temper which contemplation of their tranquil beauty inspires, than in Sidney Lanier's poem, *The Waving of the Corn*, from which I quote the last stanza: —

"From here to where the louder passions dwell,  
Green leagues of hilly separation roll:  
Trade ends where yon far clover ridges swell.  
Ye terrible Towns, ne'er claim the trembling  
soul  
That, craftless all to buy, or hoard, or sell,  
From out your deadly complex quarrel stole  
To company with large amiable trees,  
Suck summer honey with unjealous bees,  
And takes Time's strokes as softly as this morn  
Takes waving of the corn."

It is noticeable that the primitive significance of the word *corn*, still retained in Great Britain, is almost entirely lost in this country. Here, wheat is not corn, but "wheat" or "grain," and your farmer would stare at a proposition so absurd as that of "reaping the corn."

It is too late in the day to recover the word to its original wider use, and substitute for its present application the term Indian corn, or simply maize; but since maize was the earliest corn of America, why object to its carrying off the titular honors? It is no mean victor. If the dusky planter of old time could revisit the site of his corn-hills, he might well start in amazement at the stature which his favorite plant has reached under the pale-face's persuasive treatment. In the centre and raciest soil of the "corn belt," it is not uncommon for corn to stand at more than twice a tall man's height; at fifteen feet or more, in some instances. Like Cotton Mather, in some matter of information regarding the workings of witchcraft, I am the ear-witness of one who was an eye-witness in the measuring of a stalk of maize which fell no inch short of nineteen feet! The farmer of such rich fields, when he goes through the corn, is scarcely able to touch the ear with his upreached hand. Beside these Broddingnagian legions wearing the green, how squat and insignificant had appeared the Prussian Emperor's famous tall regiment! From forty to fifty bushels (shelled corn) is the common production to the acre, while eighty and even one hundred bushels are the rate of return from most favorable soils, the aggregate corn crop of the United States yearly mounting into the hundred million bushels. We may be pardoned some "tall talk" about that which has to commend it not only tallness, but a generous amplitude as well. At the New Orleans Exposition it was Nebraska's emblazoned boast, "Corn is King,"—a boast which wins ready consent when one reflects upon the royal beneficence of maize. On the occasion of the last great freshets of the Ohio River, two counties in the State of Kansas (mindful of a good turn they had received after a scourge of grasshoppers) freighted a long train of cars with corn,

and forwarded golden plenty to their needy neighbors in the East.

When we go to Sybaris, if the time be midsummer, I know not how they can entertain us better than to set before us dishes of boiled corn,—ay, *sweet* corn, tender, milky,—the full corn in the ear, requiring nothing more than the grace of a little salt. And if we go to Sparta, and their storehouse happens to afford only some ears of field corn, cannot we manage to do with these, provided the grinders are not too few, or our hardy friends have a little fire, so that they can serve us the kernels parched? But we are forgetting that Indian corn, Zea Mays, was not known to Sybaris and Sparta.

An expression of a somewhat scurrilous import is current. We have heard of "corn-fed Westerners." But why resent an epithet which has an Homeric breadth of suggestion in it, as when, in the *Iliad*, we read of

"The renowned milk-nourished men, the Hippeomolgians,

Long-lived, most just, and innocent."

Milk-nourished are they who make their repasts off sweet corn.

From 54° north to 40° south latitude, inclusive, should not be thought a meagre garden-plot. Such, at all events, Indian corn enjoys in the Western continent. If the various peoples inhabiting between the two oceans should determine to celebrate, on a certain day, a feast of brotherly love, some preparation of maize, as being most convenient to all, would probably be fixed upon as the symbolic comestible. So, in typical America, the inhabitants would observe the rite by partaking of tortilla and pinole; in our own South pone and hoe-cake, in the North brown bread and johnny-cake, would occupy the pious consideration of the celebrants, while here and there would rise the steam of various polentas of savory name, hominy, samp, mush, or hasty-pudding,—the last duly honored in song by a

warm-hearted muse of New England yore.

In some parts of the West, where wood is scarce and corn most abundant, the latter is sometimes used to feed the hearth-fire. Diligent creature of the earth, and servant of man's comfort, furnishing both food and the fagot with which to cook it! A novel idea this, — to provide one's fuel by annual spring-time plantings, gathering the thrift thereof each autumn. Every last fibre of the maize has its use, as becomes a native plant. If the ear gives food, the stalk furnishes fodder for the keeping of our domestic animals. Baskets may be made of the stalks, and mats braided of the husks, of which, also, a very good quality of paper has been made. Many a "corn-fed Westerner," though he may not indulge in sleep upon the sheaves, in after-harvest idleness, does not scorn a couch of husks, even preferring it to the ancestral feather-bed. I have lost the ear, with other zests, of childhood, so that I cannot now decide which of three, dandelion pipe, bass-wood whistle, corn-stalk fiddle, make the best music. I incline to think that the last-named instrument requires a degree of skill in its construction not less than that which went to the notching of a reed by the streams of Arcady, since our rustic violin must be fashioned entire from one piece of stalk, the golden strings thereof subtly carven from the body of the instrument, then critically raised upon a bridge; in which delicate operations much choice material has been spoiled.

But the corn-husking should not pass unmentioned, whether this merry rite be accomplished under barn-roof or in the open field. Afield, poetic suggestion is more rife. How is it that, surveying the long lines of autumnal shocks, we are reminded of the aboriginal no less than when the summer field asserted its plumed chieftaincy? The Indian's corn and the Indian's summer!

In this fine brief season named for him, his wigwam villages dot many a sunny field, dwelt in by what friendly tribe, plying, if invisibly, such arts of peace as a savage may. With half-shut eyes looking through the quivering hazy air upon the further fields, fancy helping, you seem to receive intimations of their village fires; almost, a slight film of smoke can be detected stealing upward from the tufted tops of the wigwams. No sooner are the shocks disturbed than the humble lodgers — not Indians, but a race whose ancestors were probably here contemporaneous with the Indian — scatter, panic-stricken, leaving their ruined granaries behind them. Usually, there is not wanting some Northern farmhouse dog, some Skip, or Bounce, or Towser, who, animated by the prospect of a cheap hunt, stands by when the shock is thrown down, ready to give the miserable fugitives death-gripe. I own to small compassion for a bread-and-cheese-fed rodent in the cat's clutches, but I have a tender interest for the wild mice of the shock, in their hour of peril. Taken into the hand, they remain quite motionless, only the small warm body throbbing with its volume of fear. The physiognomy of the field-mouse lacks the sophistry which characterizes the expression of the domestic species, and its thick, soft fur is as agreeable to the touch as that of the other is repugnant.

This *maizy* text has for punctuation marks the fruit of the pumpkin distributed here and there as colons and periods. Very likely the goldfinches are gathering seed-harvest in the weedy purlieus of the field, keeping up the while a constant flow of silvery "small talk." At this time of the year all toil has a flavor of indolence, is half play. So, as we sit among the corn shocks, in the tempered warmth of the south-going sun, we find something very pleasant in this task of removing garment after garment of the elaborate suit in which na-

ture has chosen to clothe the ear of the maize. Off come the sunburnt and rusty outer husks, which are as a sort of rough-and-ready great-coat; under this the vesture is of increasing fineness until the innermost husk is reached; this is of a tissuey or crape-like delicacy, the edges minutely hirsute or downy. Methinks when the stout husks are parted, the ear, with all its ivory well-set kernels, smiles broadly, declaring there's luck in *even* numbers, if you will believe its testimony, since the number of rows on all the ears in all the cornfields of the land is, invariably, some multiple of the number two, as eight and twelve, and even as high as twenty-four and thirty-two, or more.

Rarely, the husker finds an ear which

has the blush of the peach or the crimson of the bright maple leaf. Has the botanist an explanation of this anomaly? We might imagine that maize had, far back in its history, an erubescens ancestor, or that the maize-ear of the future will wear brighter colors than at present; or we might suspect that this familiar crop unconsciously emulates the chromatic splendors of the season, and so occasionally produces a red ear. To whatever conclusion we come, the rustic lovers of the old-time husking doubtless knew more than do we about the matter.

"And whene'er some lucky maiden  
Found a red ear in the husking,  
Found a maize-ear red as blood is,  
'Nushka!' cried they altogether  
'Nushka!' you shall have a sweetheart!"

*Edith M. Thomas.*

## CHILDHOOD IN ENGLISH LITERATURE AND ART.

### I.

To hunt through English literature and art for representations of childhood would seem to be like looking for the persons of children in any place where people congregate. How could there be any conspicuous absence, except under conditions which necessarily exclude the very young? Yet it is impossible to follow the stream of English literature, with this pursuit in mind, without becoming aware that at one point in its course there is a marked access of this force of childhood. There is, to be sure, a fallacy lurking in the customary study of the development of literature. We fall into the way of thinking of that literature as an organism proceeding from simpler to more complex forms; we are attent upon the transition of one epoch into another; we come to regard each period as essentially anticipatory of the succeeding period. We make the

same mistake often in our regard of historical sequence, looking at all past periods simply and exclusively with reference to the present stand from which we take our observations. A too keen sensibility to the logic which requires time for its conclusion, a too feeble sense of the logic which dwells in the relation between the seen and the unseen, — these stand in the way of a clear perception of the forces immanent in literature and life.

The distinction is worth bearing in mind when one surveys English literature with the purpose of recognizing the child in it. There are certain elemental facts and truths of which old and new cannot be predicated. The vision of helpless childhood is no modern discovery; it is no ancient revelation. The child at play was seen by Homer and by Cowper, and the latter did not derive his apprehension from any study of the former. The humanism which underlies

all literature is independent of circumstances for its perception of the great moving forces of life; it is independent of the great changes in human history; even so great a change as the advent of Christianity could not interfere with the normal expression of elemental facts in life.

Wherein, then, lies the difference between an antique and a modern apprehension of childhood? For what may one look in a survey of English literature that he would not find in Greek or Roman authors? Is there any development of human thought in relation to childhood to be traced in a literature which has reflected the mind of the centuries since the Renaissance? The most aggressive type of modern Christianity, at any rate the most free type, is to be found amongst English-speaking people; and if Christianity has in any way modified the course of thought regarding the child, the effect will certainly be seen in English literature and art.

A recollection of ballad literature, without critical inquiry of the comparative age of the writings, brings to light the familiar and frequent incident of cruelty to children in some form: of the secret putting away of babes, as in the affecting ballad of the Queen's Marie; of the cold and heartless murder, as in the Cruel Mother, and in the tragic tale of *The Child's Last Will*, where a sudden dramatic and revealing turn is given, after the child has willed its various possessions, in the lines, —

"What wish leavs't thou thy step-mother  
Little daughter dear?  
'Of hell the bitter sorrow  
Sweet step-mother mine  
For ah, ah! I am so ill, ah!"

"What wish leavs't thou thy old nurse  
Little daughter dear?  
'For her I wish the same pangs  
Sweet step-mother mine  
For ah, ah! I am so ill, ah!"

That growsome story of Lamkin, with its dripping of blood in almost every

stanza, gets half its curdling power from the slow torture of the sensibilities, as the babe is slain and then rocked in its cradle, and the mother, summoned by its cries, meets her own fate at the hands of the treacherous nurse and Lamkin, whose name is a piece of bald irony: —

"Then Lamkin's ta'en a sharp knife  
That hang down by his gaire,  
And he has gi'en the bonny babe  
A deep wound and a sair.

"Then Lamkin he rocked,  
And the fause nourice sang  
Till frae ilkae bore o' the cradle  
The red blood outsprang.

"Then out it spak the ladie  
As she stood on the stair  
'What ails my bairn, nourice,  
That he's greeting sae sair?"

"O still my bairn, nourice  
O still him wi' the pap!"  
'He winna still, lady  
For this nor for that.'

"O still my bairn, nourice;  
O still him wi' the wand!"  
'He winna still, lady,  
For a' his father's land.'

"O still my bairn, nourice,  
Oh still him wi' the bell!"  
'He winna still, lady,  
Till ye come down yoursel.'

"O the firsten step she steppit,  
She steppit on a stane;  
But the neisten step she steppit,  
She met him, Lamkin."

Another early and significant illustration is found in the popular story of Hugh of Lincoln; but instead of turning to the ballad of that name, one may better have recourse to Chaucer's version as contained in the Canterbury tale of the Prioress. In the prologue to this tale appear the words of Scripture "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings" in a paraphrase, and the Prioress turns to the Virgin, beseeching her to give words for the telling of the piteous tale. The story of Hugh of Lincoln — that in the reign of Henry III., the Jews of Lincoln stole a boy of eight years, named Hugh, tortured and crucified him — was



received with great credit, for it concentrated the venomous enmity with which Christians regarded the Jews, and by a refinement of cruelty pictured the Jews in a solitary instance as behaving in a Christian-like manner. Chaucer tells the story with exquisite pathos, lingering upon the childish ways of Hugh, and preparing the tears of his readers by picturing the little boy as a miniature saint. It can scarcely be called a picture of artless childhood; for though touches here and there bring out the prattler, Chaucer appears to have meant that his readers should be especially impressed by the piety of this "littel clergeoun," or chorister boy:—

"A littel clergeoun, seven yeer of age,  
That day by day to scole was his wone;  
And eek also, whereas he saugh thymage  
Of Cristes mooder, he hadde in usage,  
As hym was taught, to knele adoun and seye  
His Ave Marie, as he goth by the weye."

And so we are told of the little fellow eager to learn the Alma Redemptoris of his elders, and conning it as he went to and from school, his way leading through the Jews' quarter:—

"As I have seyd, thurgh-out the Jewerie  
This littel child, as he cam to and fro,  
Ful murily wolde he synge and crie  
O Alma redemptoris evere-mo  
The swetnesse hath his herte perced so  
Of Cristes mooder, that to hire to preye  
He kan nat stynte of syngyng by the weye."

The wicked Jews, vexed by his singing, kill him, and cast his body into a pit. His weeping mother seeks him, and, happening by the pit, is made aware of his presence by the miracle of his dead lips still singing the Alma Redemptoris.

In two other stories has Chaucer dwelt upon the pathos of childhood and bereft or suffering motherhood. In the Man of Law's tale of Custance, there is a touching passage where Custance and her babe are driven away from the kingdom, and exposed to the sea in the ship which had brought them. The mother kneels upon the sand before embarking, and puts her trust in the Lord.

"Her littel child lay wepyng in hir arm,  
And knelynge, pitously to hym she seyde,  
'Pees littel sone, I wol do thes noon harm!'  
With that hir kerchief of hir heed she breyde,  
And over hise littel eyen she it leyde,  
And in hir arm she lulleth it ful faste  
And in-to hevене hire eyen up she caste."

Then she commits herself and her child to Mary by the love of Mary's child.

"And up she rist, and walketh doun the stronde  
Toward the ship,—hir folweth al the prees,—  
And evere she preyeth hire child to hold his  
pees."

Again, in the Clerk's tale of Patient Griselda, the effect of the story is greatly heightened by the narrative of the successive partings of the mother with her child; and the climax is reached in the burst of gladness and pent-up feeling which overtakes Griselda at the restoration of her son and daughter. It is noticeable that in these and other instances childhood appears chiefly as an appeal to pity, rarely as an object of direct love and joy. This is not to be wondered at when one considers the character of the English race, and the nature of the redemption which it has been undergoing in the slow process of its submission to the spirit of Christ. We say the English race, without stopping to make nice distinctions between the elements which existed at the time of the Great Charter, just as we may properly speak of the American people of the time of the Constitution.

This character is marked by a brutality, a murderous spirit, which lies scarcely concealed, to-day, in the temper of every English crowd, and has left its mark on literature from the ballads to Oliver Twist. This brutal instinct, this rude, savage, northern spirit, is discovered in conflict with the disarming power of the spirit of Christ, and the stages of the conflict are most clearly indicated in poetry, which is to England what pictorial and sculptural art is to the south, the highest exponent of its spiritual life. More comprehensively, English literature affords the most complete

means of measuring the advance of England in humanity.

It belongs to the nature of this deep conflict that there should appear from time to time the finest exemplars of the ideals formed by the divine spirit, side by side with exhibitions of the most willful baseness. English literature abounds in these contrasts; it is still more expressive of tides of spiritual life, the elevation of thought and imagination succeeded by almost groveling animalism. And since one of the symbols of a perfected Christianity is the child, it is not unfair to seek for its presence in literature, nor would it be a rare thing to discover it in passages which hint at the conflict between the forces of good and evil so constantly going on.

It is not strange, therefore, that the earliest illustrations of childhood should mainly turn, as we have seen, upon that aspect which is at once most natural and most Christian. Pity, like a naked, new-born babe, does indeed ride the blast in those wild, more than half-savage bursts of the English spirit which are preserved for us in ballad literature; and in the first springs of English poetic art in Chaucer, the child is as it were the mediator between the rough story and the melody of the singer. One cannot fail to see how the introduction of the child by Chaucer, in close union with the mother, is almost a transfer of the Madonna into English poetry, — a Madonna not of ritual, but of humanity.

There are periods in the history of every nation when the inner life is more completely exposed to view, and when the student, if he be observant, may trace most clearly the fundamental arteries of being. Such a period in England was the Elizabethan era, when the tumultuous English spirit manifested itself in religion, in politics, in enterprise, in adventure, and in intellectual daring, — that era which was dominated by the great

master of English speech. It is the fashion of every age to write its characteristics in forms which have become obsolete, and to resort to masquerade for a display of its real emotions. It was because chivalry was no longer the every-day habit of men that Spenser used it for his purposes, and translated the Seven Champions of Christendom into a profounder and more impassioned poem, emblematical of that great ethical conflict which has been a significant feature of English history from the first. In that series of knightly adventures, *The Faery Queen*, wherein the field of human character is traversed, sin traced to its lurking-place, and the old dragon of unrighteousness set upon furiously, there is a conspicuous incident contained in the second book. In each book Spenser conceives the antagonist of the knight, in some spiritual form, to have wrought a mischief which needs to be repaired and revenged. Thus a dragon occasions the adventures of the Red Cross knight, and in the legend of Sir Guyon the enchantress Acrasia, or Intemperance, has caused the death of a knight and his lady; the latter slays herself because of her husband's death, and plunges her babe's innocent hands into her own bloody breast for a witness. Sir Guyon and the Palmer, standing over the dead bodies, hold grave discourse upon the incident; then they bury the dead, and seek in vain to cleanse the babe's hands in a neighboring fountain. The pure water will not be stained, and the child bears the name Ruddymane, — the Red-Handed, — and shall so bear the sign of a vengeance he is yet to execute.

It is somewhat difficult to see into the full meaning of Spenser's allegory, for the reason that the poet breaks through the meshes of his allegorical net and soars into a freer air; but there are certain strong lines running through the poem, and this of the ineradicable nature of sin is one of them. To Spenser, vexed

with problems of life, that conception of childhood which knit it closely with the generations was a significant one, and in the bloody hand of the infant, which could not be suffered to stain the chaste fountain, he saw the dread transmission of an inherited guilt and wrong. The poet and the moralist struggle for ascendancy, and in this conflict one may see reflected the passion for speculation in divinity which was already making deep marks in English literature.

But the Elizabethan era had its share of light-heartedness. The songs of the dramatists and other lyrics exhibit very clearly the influence upon literature of the revival of ancient learning. As the art of Italy showed the old poetic grace risen again under new conditions, so the dominant art of England caught a light from the uncovered glory of Greece and Rome. It was the time of the great translations of Phaer, Golding, North and Chapman; and as those translations are bold appropriations of antiquity, not timid attempts at satisfying the requisitions of scholarship, so the figures of the old mythology are used freely and ingeniously; they are naturalized in English verse far more positively than afterwards in the *elegantia* of the Queen Anne and Georgian periods. Ben Jonson's *Venus' Runaway* is an exquisite illustration of this rich, decorative use of the old fable. It was partly through this sportive appropriation of the myth of Amor, so vital in all literature, that the lullabies of the time came to get their sweetness. The poet, in putting songs into the mother's mouth, is not so much reflecting the Virgin and Child as he is possessed with the spirit of Greek beauty, and his delicate fancy plays about the image of a little Love. Thus may we read the *Golden Slumbers* of Dekker, in his *Patient Grissel*. By a pretty conceit George Gascoigne, in his *Lullaby of a Lover*, captures the sentiment of a mother and babe, to make

it tell the story of his own love and content. There is a touching song by Robert Greene in his *Menaphon*, where Sapphestia puts into her lullaby the story of her parting with the child's father:—

"Weep not, my wanton, smile upon my knee,  
When thou art old, there's grief enough for thee.  
The wanton smiled, father wept,  
Mother cried, baby leapt,  
More thou crowed, more he cried,  
Nature could not sorrow hide;  
He must go, he must kiss  
Child and mother, baby bless;  
For he left his pretty boy,  
Father's sorrow, father's joy.  
Weep not, my wanton, smile upon my knee,  
When thou art old, there's grief enough for thee."

We are apt to look for everything in Shakespeare, but in this matter of childhood we must confess that there is a meagreness of reference which almost tempts us into constructing a theory to account for it. So far as dramatic representation is concerned, the necessary limitations of the stage easily account for the absence of the young. Girls were not allowed to act in Shakespeare's time, and it is not easy to reduce boys capable of acting to the stature of young girls. More than this, boys and girls are not themselves dramatic in action, though in the more modern drama they are sometimes used, especially in domestic scenes, to heighten effects, and to make most reasonable people wish them in bed.

Still, within the limits enforced by his art, Shakespeare more than once rested much on youthful figures. The gay, agile Moth has a species of femininity about him, so that we fancy he would be most easily shown on the stage by a girl; but one readily recalls others who have distinct boyish properties. In *Coriolanus*, when the mother and wife go out to plead with the angry Roman, they take with them his little boy. Volumentia, frantic with fear, with love, and with a woman's changing passion, calls upon one and another to join her in her entreaty. Virgilia, the wife, crowds in

a word at the height of Volumnia's appeal, when the voluble grandmother has been rather excitedly talking about Coriolanus treading on his mother's womb, that brought him into the world. Virgilia strikes in, —

"Ay, and mine  
That brought you forth this boy, to keep your  
name  
Living to time."

Whereupon young Marcius, with delicious boyish brag and chivalry: —

"A' shall not tread on me;  
I'll run away till I am bigger, but then I'll fight."

In the same play there is a description of the boy which tallies exactly with the single appearance which he makes in person. Valeria drops in upon the mother and grandmother in a friendly way, and civilly asks after the boy.

"*Vir.* I thank your ladyship; well, good madam.

"*Vol.* He had rather see the swords, and hear a drum, than look upon his schoolmaster.

"*Val.* O' my word, the father's son: I'll swear, 't is a very pretty boy. O' my troth, I looked upon him o' Wednesday half an hour together: has such a confirmed countenance. I saw him run after a gilded butterfly; and when he caught it, he let it go again; and after it again: and over and over he comes, and up again; caught it again; or whether his fall enraged him, or how 't was, he did so set his teeth and tear it; Oh, I warrant, how he mammoocked it!

"*Vol.* One on 's father's moods.

"*Val.* Indeed, la, 't is a noble child.

"*Vir.* A crack, madam."

The most eminent example in Shakespeare of active childhood is unquestionably the part played by young Arthur in the drama of *King John*. It is the youth of Arthur, his dependence, his sorry inheritance of misery, his helplessness among the raging wolves about him, his childish victory over Hubert, and his forlorn death, when he leaps trembling from the walls, which impress the imagination. "Stay yet," says Pembroke to Salisbury,

"I'll go with thee  
And find the inheritance of this poor child,  
His little kingdom of a forced grave."

Shakespeare, busy with the story of

kings, is moved with deep compassion for this child among kings, who overcomes the hard heart of Hubert by his innocent words, the very strength of feeble childhood, and falls like a poor lamb upon the stones, where his prince-dom could not save him.

In that ghastly play of Titus Andronicus, which melts at last into unavailing tears, with what exquisite grace is the closing scene humanized by the passage where the elder Lucius calls his boy to the side of his dead grandsire: —

"Come hither, boy; come, come, and learn of us  
To melt in showers: thy grandsire loved thee  
well:  
Many a matter hath he told to thee,  
Meet and agreeing with thine infancy;  
In that respect, then, like a loving child,  
Shed yet some small drops from thy tender  
spring;  
Because kind nature doth require it so."

The relentless spirit of Lady Macbeth is in nothing figured more acutely than when the woman and mother is made to say, —

"I have given suck, and know  
How tender 't is to love the babe that milks  
me.  
I would, while it was smiling in my face,  
Have plucked my nipple from his boneless gums  
And dashed the brains out, had I sworn as you  
Have done to this."

In the witch's hell-broth one ingredient is "finger of birth-strangled babe," while in the portents which rise to Macbeth's vision a bloody child and a child crowned, with a tree in his hand, are apparitions of ghostly prophecy. Then in that scene where Ross discloses slowly and with pent-up passion the murder of Macduff's wife and children, and Macduff hears as in a dream, waking to the blinding light of horrid day, with what a piercing shriek he cries out, —

"He has no children!"

and then surges back to his own pitiful state, transformed for a moment into an infuriated creature, all instinct, from which a hell-kite has stolen his mate and pretty brood.

The glances at childhood, though in-

frequent, are touched with strong human feeling. Ægeon, narrating the strange adventures of his shipwreck, tells of the

"Piteous plainings of the pretty babes

That mourned for fashion, ignorant what to fear ;"

and scattered throughout the plays are passages and lines which touch lightly or significantly the realm of childhood : as,

"Pity like a naked, new-born babe ;"

"'T is the eye of childhood

That fears a painted devil,"

in *Macbeth* ;

"Love is like a child

That longs for every thing that he can come by ;"

"How wayward is this foolish love

That like a testy babe will scratch the nurse,  
And presently all humble kiss the rod,"

in *Two Gentlemen of Verona* ;

"Those that do teach young babes

Do it with gentle means and easy tasks,"

says Desdemona ; and Cleopatra, when the poisonous asp is planting its fangs, says with saddest irony, —

"Peace ! peace !

Dost thou not see my baby at my breast  
That sucks the nurse asleep ?"

There is a charming illustration of the blending of the classic myth of Amor with actual childhood in these lines of *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, where Helena says, —

"Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind ;

And therefore is winged Cupid painted blind :

Nor hath Love's mind of any judgment taste :

Wings and no eyes figure unheedy haste :

And therefore is Love said to be a child,

Because in choice he is so oft beguiled.

As wagish boys in games themselves forswear,

So the boy Love is perjured everywhere."

In the noonday musing of Jaques, when the summer sky hung over the greenwood, and he fell to thinking of the round world and all that dwell therein, the Seven Ages of Man passed in procession before him : —

"At first the infant

Muling and puking in the nurse's arms.

And then the whining school-boy, with his satchel

And shining morning face, creeping like snail

Unwillingly to school,"

until the last poor shambling creature is borne off in second childhood.

There are doubtless other passages which might be gleaned, but the survey is full enough to show how scantily, after all, Shakespeare has made use of the figure and the image of childhood. The reflection has led an ingenious writer to explain the fact by the circumstances of Shakespeare's life, which hindered his study of children. "He was clearly old for his age when still a boy, and so would have associated, not with children, but with young men. His marriage as a mere lad and the scanty legends of his youth all tend in the same direction. The course of his life led him to live apart from his children in their youth ; his busy life in London brought him into the interior of but few families ; his son, of whom he saw but little, died young. If our supposition be true, it is a pathetic thought that the great dramatist was shut out from the one kind of companionship which, even while it is in no degree intellectual, never palls. A man, whatever his mental powers, can take delight in the society of a child, when a person of intellect far more matured, but inferior to his own, would be simply insufferable." <sup>1</sup>

The explanation is rather ingenious than satisfying. Where did Shakespeare get his knowledge of the abundant life which his dramas present ? He had the privilege of most people of remembering his own boyhood, and the mind which could invent Hamlet out of such stuff as experience and observation furnished could scarcely have missed acquaintance enough with children to enable him to portray them whenever the exigencies of his drama required. No, it is simpler to refer the absence of children as actors to the limitations of the stage, and to ascribe the infrequent references to childhood to the general

<sup>1</sup> On Reading Shakespeare Through. The [London] Spectator, August 26, 1882. Qy. ? By W. M. Rossetti.

neglect of the merely domestic side of life in Shakespeare's art. Shakespeare's world was an out-of-doors, public world, and his men, women, and lovers carried on their lives with no denser concealment than a wood or an arras could afford.

The comprehensiveness of Shakespeare found some place for children; the lofty narrowness of Milton, none. The word *child*, even, can scarcely be found on a page of Milton's verse. In his Ode on the Morning of Christ's Nativity, with its Hymn, how slight is the mention of the child Jesus! How far removed is the treatment from that employed in the great procession of Madonnas!

"Say, heavenly Muse, shall not thy sacred vein  
Afford a present to the Infant God?"

The Infant God! — that is Milton's attitude, more than half pagan. In *L'Allegro* and in *Comus* the lightness, which denotes the farthest swing of Milton's fancy, is the relief which his poetic soul found from the high themes of theology, in Greek art. One is aware that Milton's fine scholarship was the salvation of his poetry, as his Puritan sense of personality held in check a nature which else might have run riot in sportiveness and sensuousness. When he permitted himself his exquisite short flights of fancy, the material in which he worked was not the fresh spring of English nature, human or earthly, but the remote Arcadian virginity which he had learned of in his books. Not dancing children, but winged sprites, caught his poetic eye.

The weight of personal responsibility which rests upon the Puritan conception of life offers small play for the wantonness and spontaneity of childhood. Moreover, the theological substratum of Puritan morality denied to childhood any freedom, and kept the life of man in waiting upon the conscious turning of the soul to God. Hence

childhood was a time of probation and suspense. It was wrong, to begin with, and was repressed in its nature until maturity should bring an active and conscious allegiance to God. Hence, also, parental anxiety was forever earnestly seeking to anticipate the maturity of age, and to secure for childhood that reasonable intellectual belief which it held to be essential to salvation; there followed often a replacement of free childhood by an abnormal development. In any event, the tendency of the system was to ignore childhood, to get rid of it as quickly as possible, and to make the state contain only self-conscious, determinate citizens of the kingdom of heaven. There was, unwittingly, a reversal of the Divine message, and it was said in effect to children. Except ye become as grown men and be converted, ye cannot enter the kingdom of heaven.

Nevertheless, though Puritanism in its excessive anxiety may have robbed childhood of its freedom, the whole spirit of the movement was one conservative of family relations, and the narratives of domestic life under Puritanic control are often full of a grave sweetness. Indeed, it may almost be said that the domestic narrative was now born into English literature. Nor could the intense concern for the spiritual well-being of children, a religious passion reinforcing natural affection, fail to give an importance to the individual life of the family, and prepare the way for that new intelligence of the scope of childhood which was to come later to an England still largely dominated by Puritan ideas.

Milton expressed the high flight of the soul above earthly things. He took his place upon a summit where he could show the soul all the confines of heaven and earth. Bunyan, stirred by like religious impulses, made his soul trudge sturdily along toward an earthly paradise. The realism of his story often veils successfully the spiritual sense, and



makes it possible for children to read the *Pilgrim's Progress* with but faint conception of its religious import. In the second part of the allegory, Christian's wife and children set out on their ramble, in Christian's footsteps. There is no lack of individuality in characterization of the persons. The children are distinctly conceived as children; they are, to be sure, made to conform occasionally to the demands of the spiritual side of the allegory, yet they remain children, and by their speech and action betray the childish mind.

They come in sight of the lions, and "the boys that went before were glad to cringe behind, for they were afraid of the lions, so they stepped back and went behind." When they come to the Porter's Lodge, they abide there a while with Prudence, Piety, and Charity; Prudence catechises the four children, who return commendably correct answers. But Matthew, the oldest boy, falls sick of the gripes; and when the physician asks Christiana what he has been eating lately, she is as ignorant as any mother can be.

"Then said Samuel," who is as communicative as most younger brothers, "Mother, mother, what was that which my brother did gather up and eat, so soon as we were come from the Gate that is at the head of this way? You know that there was an orchard on the left hand, on the other side of the wall, and some of the trees hung over the wall, and my brother did plash and did eat."

"'True, my child,' said Christiana, 'he did take thereof and did eat, naughty boy as he was. I did chide him, and yet he would eat thereof.'" So Mr. Skill, the physician, proceeds to make a purge. "You know," says Bunyan, in a sly parenthesis, "physicians give strange medicines to their patients." "And it was made up," he goes on, "into pills, with a promise or two, and a proportionable quantity of salt. Now he was to take

them three at a time, fasting, in half a quarter of a pint of Tears of Repentance. When this Portion was prepared and brought to the boy, he was loth to take it, though torn with the gripes as if he should be pulled in pieces. 'Come, come,' said the physician, 'you must take it.' 'It goes against my stomach,' said the boy. 'I must have you take it,' said his mother. 'I shall vomit it up again,' said the boy. 'Pray, sir,' said Christiana to Mr. Skill, 'how does it taste?' 'It has no ill taste,' said the doctor, and with that she touched one of the pills with the tip of her tongue. 'O Matthew,' said she, 'this Portion is sweeter than honey. If thou lovest thy mother, if thou lovest thy brothers, if thou lovest Mercy, if thou lovest thy life, take it.' So with much ado, after a short prayer for the blessing of God upon it, he took it, and it wrought kindly with him. It caused him to purge, it caused him to sleep and rest quietly, it put him into a fine heat and breathing sweat, and did quite rid him of his gripes."

The story is dotted with these life-like incidents, and the consistency is rather in the basis of the allegory than in the allegory itself. In truth, we get in the *Pilgrim's Progress* an inimitable picture of social life in the lower middle class of England, and in this second part a very vivid glimpse of a Puritan household.

Milton's Christmas Hymn has the organ roll of a mind moving among high themes, and making the earth one of the golden spheres. Pope's sacred eclogue of the Messiah is perhaps the completest expression of the religious sentiment of an age which was consciously bounded by space and time. In Pope's day, the world was scarcely a part of a greater universe; eternity was only a prolongation of time, and the sense of beauty, acute as it was, was always sharply defined. Pope's rhymed

couplets, with their absolute finality, their clean conclusion, their epigrammatic snap, are the most perfect symbols of the English mind of that period. When in the Messiah we read, —

“Rapt into future times the bard begun,  
A Virgin shall conceive, a Virgin bear a son!

Swift fly the years and rise the expected morn!  
O spring to light, auspicious babe, be born!”

we remember Milton's Infant God. The two poets touch, with a like faintness, the childhood of Jesus, but the one through awe and grandeur of contemplation, the other through the polite indifference of a man of the world. Or take Pope's mundane philosophy, as exhibited most elaborately in his *Essay on Man*, and set it beside Shakespeare's *Seven Ages of Man* : —

“Behold the child, by Nature's kindly law  
Pleased with a rattle, tickled with a straw :  
Some livelier plaything gives his youth delight,  
A little louder, but as empty quite:  
Scarfs, garters, gold, amuse his ripper stage,  
And beads and prayer-books are the toys of age:  
Pleased with this bauble still, as that before ;  
Till tired he sleeps and life's poor play is o'er.”

This is the only passage in the *Essay* hinting at childhood, and suffices to indicate how entirely insignificant in the eyes of the philosophy underlying Pope and his school was the whole thought of childhood. The passage, while not perhaps consciously imitative of Shakespeare, suggests comparison, and one finds in *Jaques* under the greenwood a more human feeling. Commend us to the tramp before the drawing-room philosopher!

The prelude notes of a new literature were sounded by Gray, Goldsmith, and Cowper. It was to be a literature which touched the earth again, the earth of a common nature, the earth also of a national inheritance. It is significant that Gray, with his delicate taste and fine classical scholarship, when he composed his *Elegy* used first the names of eminent Romans when he wrote : —

“Some village Cato, who with dauntless breast  
The little tyrant of the fields withstood ;  
Some mute, inglorious Tully here may rest,  
Some Cæsar, guiltless of his country's blood.”

He changed these names for those of English heroes, and in doing so broke away from traditions which still had a strong hold in literature. It is a pity that for reasons hard to perceive he should have thought best to omit the charming stanza, —

“There, scattered oft, the earliest of the year,  
By hands unseen are showers of violets found :  
The Red-breast loves to build and warble there,  
And little footsteps lightly print the ground.”

When Gray wrote this he doubtless had in mind the ballad of the *Children in the Wood*. In the succession of English pictures which he does give is that lovely one, —

“For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,  
Or busy housewife ply her evening's care ;  
No children run to lisp their sire's return,  
Or climb his knees the evening kiss to share.”

In his poem *On a Distant Prospect of Eton College* he has lines which are instinct with a feeling for childhood and youth. There is, it is true, a touch of artificiality in the use made of childhood in this poem, as a foil for tried manhood, its little life treated as the lost golden age of mankind ; but that sentiment was a prevailing one in the period.

Goldsmith, whose Bohemianism helped to release him from subservience to declining fashions in literature, treats childhood in a more genuine and artless fashion. In his prose and poetry I hear the first faint notes of that song of childhood which in a generation more was to burst from many lips. The sweetness which trembles in the *Deserted Village* finds easy expression in forms and images which call up childhood to memory, as in those lines, —

“The playful children just let loose from school,”

“E'en children followed with endearing wile,  
And plucked his gown, to share the good man's smile,” —

and in the quaint picture of the village school.

It is in the *Vicar of Wakefield*, however, that one finds the freest play of fancy about childish figures. Goldsmith says of his hero that "he unites in himself the three greatest characters upon earth,—he is a priest, a husbandman, and the father of a family;" and the whole of the significant preface may lead one to revise the estimate of Goldsmith which his contemporaries have fastened upon English literary history. The waywardness and unconventionality of this man of genius and his eager desire to be accepted by the world, which was then the great world, were the characteristics which most impressed the shal- lower minds about him. In truth, he had not only an extraordinary sympathy with the ever-varying, ever-constant flux of human life, but he dropped a deeper plummet than any English thinker since Milton.

It was in part his loneliness that threw him upon children for complete sympathy; in part also his prophetic sense, for he had an unerring vision of what constituted the strength and the weakness of England. After the portraiture of the *Vicar* himself, there are no finer sketches than those of the little children. "It would be fruitless," says the unworldly *Vicar*, "to deny exultation when I saw my little ones about me;" and from time to time in the tale, the youngest children, Dick and Bill, trot forward in an entirely natural manner. They show an engaging fondness for Mr. Thornhill. "The whole family seemed earnest to please him. . . . My little ones were no less busy, and fondly stuck close to the stranger. All my endeavors could scarcely keep their dirty fingers from handling and tarnishing the lace on his clothes, and lifting up the flaps of his pocket holes to see what was there." The character of Mr. Burchell is largely drawn by its association with the children. The account

given by little Dick of the carrying off of Olivia is full of charming childish spirit, and there is an exquisite passage where the *Vicar* returns home with the news of Olivia's recovery, and discovers his house to be on fire, while in a tumult of confusion the older members of the family rush out of the dwelling.

"I gazed upon them and upon it by turns," proceeds the *Vicar*, "and then looked round me for my two little ones; but they were not to be seen. O misery! 'Where,' cried I, 'where are my little ones?' 'They are burnt to death in the flames,' says my wife calmly, 'and I will die with them.' That moment I heard the cry of the babes within, who were just awaked by the fire, and nothing could have stopped me. 'Where, where are my children?' cried I, rushing through the flames, and bursting the door of the chamber in which they were confined. 'Where are my little ones?' 'Here, dear papa, here we are!' cried they together, while the flames were just catching the bed where they lay. I caught them both in my arms, and snatching them through the fire as fast as possible, just as I was got out the roof sunk in. 'Now,' cried I, holding up my children, 'now let the flames burn on, and all my possessions perish. Here they are. I have saved my treasure. Here, my dearest, here are our treasures, and we shall yet be happy.' We kissed our little darlings a thousand times; they clasped us round the neck, and seemed to share our transports, while their mother laughed and wept by turns."

Cowper was more secluded from his time and its influence than Goldsmith, but like him he felt the instinct for a return to the elemental in life and nature. The gentleness of Cowper, combined with a poetic sensibility, found expression in simple themes. His life, led in a pastoral country, and occupied with trivial pleasures, offered him primitive material, and he sang of hares, and

goldfish, and children. His *Tirocinium*, or a Review of Schools, though having a didactic intention, has some charming bits of descriptive writing, as in the familiar lines which describe the sport of

"The little ones, unbuttoned, glowing hot."

The description melts, as do so many of Cowper's retrospections, into a tender melancholy. A deeper note still is struck in his *Lines on the Receipt of my Mother's Picture*.

The new birth which was coming to England had its premonitions in literature. It had them also in art. In this period appeared Sir Joshua Reynolds and Gainsborough: the one preëminently a painter of humanity, the other of nature, and both of them moved by a spirit of freedom, under well-recognized academic rules. There is in their work a lingering of the old formal character which took sharp account of the diversities of rank, and separated things common from things choice; yet they both belong to the new world rather than

to the old, and in nothing is this more remarkable than in the number and character of the children pieces painted by Reynolds. They are a delight to the eye, and in the true democracy of art we know no distinction between Master Crewe as Henry VIII. and a Boy with a Child on his back and cabbage nets in his hand. What a revelation of childhood is in this great group! There is the tenderness of the Children in the Wood, the peace of the Sleeping Child, where nature itself is in slumber, the timidity of the Strawberry Girl, the wildness of the Gypsy Boy, the shy grace of Pickaback, the delightful wonder of Master Bunbury, the sweet simplicity and innocence in the pictures so named, and the spiritual yet human beauty of the Angels' heads. Reynolds studied the work of the mediæval painters, but he came back to England and painted English children. Goldsmith's Vicar, Cowper's *Lines on his mother's portrait*, and Reynolds's children bring us close to the heart of our subject.

*Horace E. Scudder.*

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### WHEN LESSER LOVES.

WHEN lesser loves by the relentless flow  
 Of mighty currents from my arms were torn,  
 And swept, unheeding, to that silent bourn  
 Whose mystic shades no living man may know,  
 By night, by day, I sang my song, and so  
 Out of the sackcloth that my soul had worn  
 Weaving my purple, I forgot to mourn,  
 Pouring my grief out in melodious woe!  
 Now am I dumb, dear heart. My lips are mute.  
 Yet if from yonder blue height thou dost lean  
 Earthward, remembering love's last wordless kiss,  
 Know thou no trembling thrills of harp or lute,  
 Dying soft wails and tender songs between,  
 Were half so voiceful as this silence is!

*Julia C. R. Dorr.*

## MINING FOR A MASTODON.

## I.

THE widow Purvines was, safely speaking, the oldest inhabitant of the Maryland settlement. Her husband, Daniel Purvines, would have been a still older inhabitant, but many years ago he slept with his fathers, and Charity, his wife, reigned in his stead. She was indeed a rural autocrat, but a very wise and benevolent one. The vigor and brilliancy of her intellect enabled her to bear with ease a great weight of responsibility. Her memory was remarkably retentive, and her indefatigable and far-reaching human interest, vulgarly termed curiosity, made her a cyclopædia of neighborhood knowledge, useful and otherwise.

When Mrs. Purvines was led to speak of that portion of nature's domain over which her eyes and feet had wandered for nearly forty years, her language was appreciative, yet discriminating. At times she would diverge so far from her fixed premises, the indisputable superiority of Northern Indiana, as to admit the reasonableness of a doubt touching the beneficence of the existing distribution of wet land and dry. Once, in conversation with Mr. Buffey, a colporteur of her church, who availed himself of her hospitality several times a year, the good widow remarked, —

"I think this section of springy kentry can be accounted for only in one way. When the good Parent had got through makin' the United States and the rest of the world, he found he had on hand a large surplus of wild grass, — all the coarsest sorts, — marsh-mallars, flower-de-loose, yellor and red stemmed willers, cat-tails, and scrubby jack-oaks. Well, in the 'conomy of nater there's no waste; so this peccoliarly moist corner of Indiany was made

just a purpose for that stuff to grow in. And, Lord, how it *hes* growed!"

"But many of the marshes have been reclaimed by drainage, and now make valuable meadow-lands," suggested Mr. Buffey.

"Yes," said the widow, "there's been a power of ditchin' done, in this and ad-jinin' counties, and some of the marshes have turned out well enough; but there's now and then a track that's good to raise nothin' yerthly but what the Almighty planted on it. May be you've noticed a long, lonesome-looking marsh, half a mile south o' here, on the Sudmore road?"

"I have," assented Mr. Buffey; "the highroad strikes a neck of it, a few rods beyond a quaint, wood-colored cottage, with fruit trees at the rear, and one spreading maple by the front gate. I stopped there with my books once, but sold nothing."

"Well, that house was built by the owner of the big marsh. There's a matter of seventy acres in that marsh, and it's sartin the most hopeless portion of the habited footstool. Why, the Desert of Sahary's a 'bodiment of goodwill to men, compared to it; for she is n't so deceivin'; she makes no false promises!"

"You speak strongly, sister Purvines," said the colporteur, a wan look of interest lighting up his pale face.

"I feel strongly," she said, "when I think how that marsh has swallered up the lives and fortunes of a promisin' family. But where's the sense in reflectin' on a piece of onsensate nater, when it's man's obstinacy that should be blamed? You see, when Ozias Rowdybum came to Sudmore County, there were a few still airlier settlers here. Me and Dan'l were amongst 'em. We opened our house to the new-comers, as was the

kestom of the kentry, till they could get their own place fixed to move into. They stopped with us a matter of three weeks, and it was long enough to show us the kind of man he was — that sot, nothin' could move him! He was full of plans about his farm, speshully the marsh. Dan'l told him one day that he had made a mistake, buyin' so much wet land, and give it as his opinion that the marsh was one of the ornery kind that no 'mount of labor could reclaim. Rowdybum got mad, and his poor, pressed-down wife turned pale. After that we let him talk, thinkin' that his prop'ty and his plans were none o' our business. But as years passed on, I 'd defy anybody, livin' 's close as we did, not to take a vital interest in that creeter's goin's-on. He had enough dry land to make a good livin' on, but he was dead bent on clearin' up the marsh and gettin' it into tame grass. He cut willers in the winter and ditched and mowed wire-grass in the summer, neglectin' his plough-land the whiles. His family sided with the neighbors, and told him it was no use. Then he got hard and kinder ugly with them. He 'd sot his detarmined soul on makin' somethin' out o' that marsh, and he 'd do it or die! His boys grew up into likely chaps; just the sort to make good farmers, with encouragement, but they never got any.

"When they 'd been here about four year, a sad thing happened. Rolf, the oldest boy, got bit in the foot by a rattler, workin' down in the marsh. No doctor could be got to him till the next day, and he died. We all thought his mother would die, too, but she did n't. For a year or two after that Rowdy let the marsh alone, and tended to his dry land. People thought he was comin' to his senses. He fixed up the house right comfortable, and planted out that orchard. Then the evil spirit entered into him again, and gave him no rest for ten years. He got a ditch dug, clear through,

a mighty deep and wide one, and it drenched the marsh effectual. He sold off everything loose on the place, includin' a pair of colts he had solemn give to Reuben, to pay the ditchers. Late in the fall he turned off the wild grass, and sowed down fifty acres strong to timothy and red-top. In the spring it kem up, thick as dog's hair; there was just rain enough to keep it goin', and that year Rowdybum had a crop of tame hay. And it was *extry* good, and brought a good price. But the next summer, and every summer after that, the tame grass burnt out. You see, there was just no sile at all, — nothin' but vegetable roots, 'thout scarcely a particle o' grit, and no bottom till you got down to the blue clay.

"But the old man worked on, alone finally, for Reuben left home in disgust. He was last heard of way out beyant the Rocky Mountains. He went prospectin' into the Flat Foot kentry, and most likely the Flat Feet made an end of him. There was nobody left but Rowdy and his wife and their girl Anice. She was about fifteen year old when Rube went away. The old man got deep in debt, gettin' the ditches cleared out and buyin' such quantities of grass seed, and piece after piece of his dry land was sold; but still he hung on to that dismal swamp. One summer he sot fire to a big pile of willers he 'd been cuttin'. The fire spread and burned and eat down into them spongy bogs, makin' holes four and five feet deep. The season was dry, and that fire worked away there for weeks. In the fall, when the rains had filled the marsh with water, one of his cows waded out and fell into one o' them holes. Rowdybum, in tryin' to get her out, wrenched hisself, somehow, and dropped down beside her. Anice found him there, and ran for help. They got him into the house, but he only lived a few hours. They burried him beside Rolf, at the foot o' the orchard."

"And how have those two, the widow



and her daughter, got along since?" inquired the colporteur.

"Any way they could. They 've been pretty poor sometimes. Anice was a good common-school scholar, but she went to Dalton Seminary to take on some more learnin'; then she came home and 'plied for the deestrick school. She taught it two terms, and could 'a' had it right along, but her mother broke down with a disease the doctors called locomotive attraction [mem., locomotor ataxy], and Anice had to give up her school and stay at home to take care of her. She does n't seem to suffer, ony she can't walk. That was about five year ago."

"But who has supported them?" inquired Mr. Buffey. "The income from the remnant of the farm would hardly do it, and pay taxes."

"It has done it, *somehow*. Anice has worked and managed. She has kept cows and fowls and bees. That girl has *worked*, I tell you; and such a lonesome life! But that *beater* of a marsh! Last summer it turned up somethin' new. Anice was walkin' over it, one day, lookin' for cranberries, when, comin' to one o' them fire-holes, she saw somethin' curious at the bottom. She got down and poked about some, and concluded it was a tush o' one o' them queer bein's that lived and went out 'fore Adam named the beasts in the garden. She 'got Lonzo Eckert to dig it up, and she's got it in their wood-shed, — a great tusk like a elephant's, only bigger and coal black. There's been no superstition 'mong my people since my grandfather's time; if there was, I 'd be moved to say that burried-up creeter had hed somethin' to do with the 'fairs of that misfortnit family."

## II.

The next evening, Mr. Buffey, having spent the day showing his books to the

different families in the neighborhood, found himself again at the widow Purvines'. After supper he drew up to the big kerosene lamp, put on his glasses, and wrote a letter.

DEAR SELDON, — Your favor of recent date received. It has moved me profoundly. Thank you, my dear boy, and God bless you! If *dark days* ever do come, I promise to remember what you have said. I am glad I owe you a letter, for I have something to communicate that you will think worth while. In my rounds to-day, I called upon a family who have in their possession a portion of the tusk (five feet in length, ivory and enamel perfect) of a *mastodon giganteus*. It was found in a marsh owned by this family, — Rhodobaum by name, — and I am strongly of the opinion that the entire skeleton is there and could be exhumed. If you should care to divert your attention from the cephalopods and batrachians of the carboniferous period long enough to look after this relic of post-tertiary life, I have no doubt you could easily become its possessor. A letter from you would reach me a week hence, at Fort Wayne.

Yours in affectionate obligation,

HIRSH BUFFEY.

This letter was received and read in a long, low apartment, counting-room, library, and museum combined, in a certain rambling old town in Southern Indiana. Its recipient, Hayne Seldon, was a thick-set man, in age anywhere between thirty-five and forty. He had that peculiar sanguine physiognomy which always leaves one in doubt as to its owner's age. At first glance he was rather impressive from his want of good looks. His hair was red and his eyes small. His nose and mouth were regular, and the latter feature could be very expressive. But the considerate stranger never gives painfully close scrutiny to the features of one who is the victim

of a great misfortune. Seldon had only one hand.

He read Mr. Buffey's letter, laid it upon his knee, smoothed it out with his hand, — which, by the way, might have served for an artist's model, — then took it up and read it again, attentively.

This was in the early spring. A few weeks later Mr. Seldon found himself in the Maryland settlement, with the address of Mrs. Purvines in his pocket and a valuable fossil in his mind's eye. At the widow's house he met the colporteur by appointment. Our geologist was the most diffident of men, and he had requested his old friend to be on hand to introduce him to his landlady, and to the people who owned the mastodon.

"Anice has been readin' a lot about them queer pre-Adamites," said Mrs. Purvines, as she sat at her bounteous breakfast table with her two guests. "I've been tellin' her to keep that new-fangled knowledge close atween herself and her old Aunt Charity. You know there's a heap in it that's onsettlin' to them that's weak in the faith. But I know myself to be 'stablished, and Anice is that near an angel born that I sometimes think it don't much matter whether she holds any views or not."

"I was surprised at her air of cultivation," said Mr. Buffey, "till I saw their books."

"Them works was once owned by Mrs. Rowdybum's father. She brought them from the East in the big chest, with her quilts and coverlids packed on top. There's just fifty o' them works. Rowdybum used to be spoke of fur and near as the man who had fifty books in his house. Folks seemed to think it was all along of his oddity; but land knows, he wa'n't to blame for the books. They were none o' his."

When Seldon and Anice Rhodobaum met, later that day, they were strongly moved by a common emotion. The prevailing sentiment in the breast of each

was compassion for the other. Anice felt her pity stirred by the empty sleeve, of which its owner was scarcely aware at the moment. Seldon's honest heart commiserated the lonely young woman, with her sad brown eyes, insignificant figure, and forlorn surroundings. His quick observation took in the evident narrowness of means, the patient, helpless mother; and he caught a mental glimpse of the background of melancholy years, against which these two pathetic figures were set. When he made his errand known, Anice's dark face brightened, and she broke into a little laugh of genuine amusement, as she said, —

"You passed right by the specimen, on your way to the door. I loaned it to a church-fair in Sudmore, last week. They curtained off a corner of the hall and made a peep-show, with the tusk and a stuffed crocodile. I hear it paid right well; but when they returned my property they did not take the trouble to put it where they found it, but just rolled it off the wagon, over the fence, and drove away."

She told this with fine humor, as she led the way to where the fossil lay, — an object quite too heavy for her slender hands to lift. She was capable of appreciating the absurdity of the peep-show, as well as the coolness of the committee.

Seldon satisfied himself that it would be worth while to excavate for other remains. The ditches were choked, and the marsh was wet from the spring rains; but later Anice would write him, and he would arrange for the work.

About the middle of August, Seldon heard from Miss Rhodobaum. The marsh was quite dry, she wrote, and he might now come and direct the digging for the mastodon. A week later he was domiciled with the widow Purvines, and Lonzo Eckert, with his partner at odd jobs, Bijah Hoke, were at work under his supervision.

Near the spot where Anice had found the piece of tusk the mate to it was discovered, a magnificent specimen, fully nine feet in length and weighing over one hundred pounds. The next important find was the perfect lower jaw, with its mammoth grinders. Then several scattered teeth were unearthed, some of them with worn-off cusps, presenting a beautiful section of the crown. The bony interior was a deep chocolate in color. The enamel showed pearly white on its worn edges, where it was a quarter of an inch in thickness, and on its natural surface jet black from the action of mineral agents in the soil.

There came a week of rain, and the work was necessarily stopped, till the marsh had time to become dry again. Mr. Seldon manifested no impatience at this enforced delay. Unconsciously he was acquiring an interest more absorbing than geology. The widow Rhodobaum's cottage knew him for a daily visitor. In the absence of any literature whatever at his boarding-place, the fifty books at the other house were a resource. He found that they were mainly sermons, with a sprinkling of such authors as Young, Goldsmith, Dryden, Cowper, Sterne, and De Quincey. The volumes just named Anice had read again and again. Of newer literature she knew almost nothing. Seldon felt a deep thrill as he thought of the delight it would afford some one — any one — to give her the happiness of an acquaintance with Scott, Dickens, and their *confrères*. But these clear-cut English classics, combined with an experience, sombre from infancy and peculiar in its discipline, had made Anice what she was, a sweet, grave, self-forgetting woman, one of a thousand. The springs of imagination and mirthfulness sparkled deep and clear within her, though for the most part repressed and silent. Seldon thought he understood her well, and perhaps he did. She was very simple and frank with him about her life and

her thoughts; and he in turn told her all his history.

He was an only son, had received a medical education, and, while taking a post-graduate course in an Eastern city met with the misfortune that had changed the color of his life. He had poisoned his hand, making an autopsy; the loss of his arm was the result, and he abandoned his profession. Practical surgery had mainly attracted him, and a surgeon must have two hands. For years he had lived an uneventful, lonely life, giving his time to a rather aimless pursuit of science. Then a valuable deposit of cannel-coal was discovered upon some land he had inherited. He developed a mine, and it had yielded him an interest in life and a fortune. Geology had always been a favorite study with him, and since his acquaintance with the coal-measures it had become almost an absorbent. The mastodon was not to form part of his own private collection, but was to be the property of the college museum at G—. Anice and her mother did not quite know whether the handsome sum of money he had placed to their credit in the Sudmore bank, as the price of the mastodon, came from the college or from him.

The work in the marsh was resumed, with this result: all the bones of the left fore leg and foot were found, some portions of the skull, and three ribs. While the digging was in progress, a continual procession of people crossed the marsh from the highroad, to gaze on the monster bones. Many and diverse were the opinions advanced by the rustic population, concerning the huge animal. One farmer thought there must be some undiscovered continent or island on the face of the globe, "where them lumberin' quaderpeds are livin' and roamin' still, same as they used ter."

"But how did this one get here?" asked another.

"Time o' the flood. Time o' the

flood, I tell ye. What do you think about it, Lonzo?"

The hind thus addressed was down in the pit. He stuck his spade into the marl, hitched up his overalls, rolled his tobacco, and replied, —

"Well, I've a the'ry, as well's the rest of ye. I think this animul were a female, and there were a young one. And the young one were cuttin' of its stummick teeth, and feelin' feverish waded in here for a mouthful of suthin' to cool its gums; and the old one naterally follered, and naterally got mired."

There was a laugh and a question: —

"But where's the young one? You have n't found any bones of a young one."

"No, ner we hain't found near all the bones of the old one, and I judge we aint a-goin' to."

And indeed they did not. They removed the ground for a considerable distance on every side, occupying several days in the work, and then gave up the search. Seldon had the fossil bones boxed and shipped away, but still he lingered on, himself.

One morning, very early, he walked out in the direction of the wood-colored cottage by the marsh. He had no thought of presenting himself there at that hour; but he rambled on till he found himself beneath a roadside elm, within plain sight of the house. As he stood there, the door suddenly opened, and Anice appeared, with something of wildness and distress in her manner. She looked up and down the road, then returned within. A few minutes later Seldon stood upon the threshold, and Anice, coming out again, met him there.

"What is it?" he asked, with infinite sympathy in his tones.

"My mother — she is very ill! She had a fall. She has not known me all night. No one came, and I could not leave her. I am so glad you are here,

— so glad! Stay, now, till I go for Aunt Charity."

"I will go," he said; but she drew him within, whispering hurriedly, —

"No, no. I know a nearer path, and I will run;" and she was gone ere she ceased speaking.

The invalid's room was the largest in the house, and as cosy as love and tidy skill could make it. On the low bed lay the widow in a deep stupor. Seldon felt her pulse, and found it moderately strong and regular. Death, he believed, was not imminent; but what more of trial was before this prostrate one and her devoted daughter, who could tell? His heart was wrung, for he loved Anice, and the thought of all she had endured, and must still endure, gave him the severest pang he had ever felt. He smoothed back the thin locks from the brow of the pale sleeper, then went out into the small, bare kitchen, and walked its narrow floor as the minutes passed.

"Anice!" he murmured, unconsciously. "Poor little girl! Anice — Anice!"

"Did you speak my name, sir?" She had returned. Mrs. Purvines was with her mother.

"Perhaps I did," he said, with a strange smile. "I was thinking of you, and yearning over you, and loving you with all my soul!"

She looked at him vaguely out of her deep eyes which had not known sleep for so many hours. Then throwing out her arms upon the kitchen table, she dropped her face upon them with the lonely cry, —

"Oh, my mother! — my mother!"

His beautiful, sensitive hand rested lightly on her bowed head, and strayed along the loosened mass of her thick black hair, as he said, "Be comforted, Anice; she will not die now. I feel confident that she will be better soon."

His solacing prophecy came true.

## III.

"It was all along o' that swoopin' cat o' thern," explained Aunt Charity to Mr. Seldon that evening, as he was finishing his peaches and cream. "You see, Anice was dressin' a chicken to fry for their supper, and havin' to go into the buttery for something, left it on the work-table a minute. The big cat jumped up, and the old lady, forgettin' her helplessness, sprung to save the fowl, and of course fell like a log. I reckon she must 'a' struck her head, and that caused her to go off in a wanderin' sleep. The doctor says it were the shock like, and she'll be in her chair again, in a day or two. I never could abide a cat, and — Just look at that, now! There comes that tarnal gobbler again down to the turkey-chicks' coop!"

The good woman sprang from her chair, caught her sun-bonnet from its hook, and disappeared out of the back door. Seldon heard a vigorous "shoo-ing," and a shower of sticks flying about. Presently she returned, somewhat red and breathless, and resumed her place at the table.

"To think," she said, "of me abusin' my neighbor's cat, and keepin' such an onnatural bird on the place as that gobbler! He'll stand by the coop for an hour, cranin' that head o' hisn, till one of the little turkeys slips through the pickets; then he'll take it by the scruff o' the neck, and lift it up slow, and set it down hard, two or three times. There's no tellin' what idee of p'rental duty the critter's got, but he does it sort o' solemn, as though it were a matter o' discipline. But it don't agree with the young ones, and he's got to stop it, or his time'll come 'fore Thanks-givin'."

The next day her guest went away, to visit some ancient mounds, near the state line. He told her he might be gone a week; he was really absent two.

During this interval, Mrs. Rhodobaum recovered her usual degree of strength. Anice went about like one in a dream. A deep, sweet wonder was in her thoughts. Her remembrance of that troubled morning was indistinct, but surely there was matchless tenderness in his manner; and — did he say he loved her, or did she dream it, during the long, still afternoon, while Aunt Charity sat with her mother, and she slumbered on her bed?

She was in her garden, standing among flower-stalks taller than herself, when he came to see her again, and she learned the truth of her trembling surmises. They talked awhile of indifferent things, — the autumn splendors of the country garden, his little journey, and what he had seen and learned. Then he said abruptly, "What will you do, when I am gone?"

She gave him a little frightened glance, then smiled again, as she said, "Oh, for a time I shall be wishing for rain, to put out the fire in the marsh," — some one had dropped a coal from a lighted pipe, and the peat was smouldering, — "and for wind to blow the smoke away. And some fine morning my wish will come true. Then the snow will begin to fall, and the great white winter will settle down about us, and I shall pass the days wishing it were over, and that spring would come. And that wish also will come true, if I am good and patient."

"Good and patient!" he repeated softly; a moment after he exclaimed, "Oh, if I were only as other men, that I might take you for my own! But you, dear, have been such a burden-bearer all your days, it would be a cowardly act to ask you to share the life of one like myself, who has to be helped at almost every turn!"

I do not know what she said in answer. Perhaps it was by a broken word or two, a look, a caressing touch on the empty sleeve, that she made him

understand how desolate she would have been if he had not given her his love, and the sweet privilege of blessing and serving him with hers.

A year passed, and when October came again an event occurred in the life of the widow Purvines: she received a letter. It was from Anice Seldon, and in it were these words:—

“My blessed mother is stronger and brighter than she has been for years, though still unable to walk. Dear old Mr. Buffey has grown so nearly blind that he is no longer able to travel with his books, and has come to live with us. He was an early friend of my husband’s father, and has always felt a peculiar

nearness to Hayne, because, like him, he was turned aside from his life-plans by a physical misfortune. He would have been a minister, if his sight had not failed in his youth. I am glad we can take care of the good old man; of course we could not, if we were poor. Hayne says I am now literally hands, feet, and eyes to the maimed, halt, and blind. He bows down to me as if I were some sort of saint or martyr; while I know I am only a very human little woman, though a singularly fortunate and happy one.

“Our mastodon is behind glass doors in the G— college museum. I expect to visit that cabinet once a year. It is a sort of shrine.”

*Angelina Teal.*

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## ON HORSEBACK.

### III.

FROM Burnsville the next point in our route was Asheville, the most considerable city in western North Carolina, a resort of fashion, and the capital of Buncombe County. It is distant some forty to forty-five miles, too long a journey for one day over such roads. The easier and common route is by the Ford of Big Ivy, eighteen miles,—the first stopping place; and that was a long ride for the late afternoon when we were in condition to move.

The landlord suggested that we take another route, stay that night on Caney River with Big Tom Wilson, only eight miles from Burnsville, cross Mt. Mitchell, and go down the valley of the Swannanoa to Asheville. He represented this route as shorter and infinitely more picturesque. There was nothing worth seeing on the Big Ivy way. With scarcely a moment’s reflection, and while the horses were saddling, we decided to ride to Big Tom Wilson’s. I could not at the time

understand, and I cannot now, why the Professor consented. I should hardly dare yet confess to my fixed purpose to ascend Mt. Mitchell. It was equally fixed in the Professor’s mind not to do it. We had not discussed it much. But it is safe to say that if he had one well defined purpose on this trip, it was not to climb Mitchell. “Not,” as he put it, “Not mine own fears, nor the prophetic soul  
Of the wide world dreaming on things to come,” had suggested the possibility that he could do it.

But at the moment the easiest thing to do seemed to be to ride down to Wilson’s. When there we could turn across country to the Big Ivy, although, said the landlord, you can ride over Mitchell just as easy as anywhere—a lady rode plumb over the peak of it last week, and never got off her horse. You are not obliged to go; at Big Tom’s, you can go any way you please.

Besides, Big Tom himself weighed in the scale more than Mt. Mitchell, and not to see him was to miss one of



the most characteristic productions of the country, the typical backwoodsman, hunter, guide. So we rode down Bolling Creek, through a pretty, broken country, crossed the Caney River, and followed it up a few miles to Wilson's plantation. There are little intervalles along the river, where hay is cut and corn grown, but the region is not much cleared, and the stock browse about in the forest. Wilson is the agent of the New York owner of a tract of some thirteen thousand acres of forest, including the greater portion of Mt. Mitchell, a wilderness well stocked with bears and deer, and full of streams abounding in trout. It is also the playground of the rattlesnake. With all these attractions Big Tom's life is made lively in watching game poachers, and endeavoring to keep out the foraging cattle of the few neighbors. It is not that the cattle do much injury in the forest, but the looking after them is made a pretense for roaming around, and the roamers are liable to have to defend themselves against the deer, or their curiosity is excited about the bears, and lately they have taken to exploding powder in the streams to kill the fish.

Big Tom's plantation has an open-work stable, an ill-put-together frame house, with two rooms and a kitchen, and a veranda in front, a loft, and a spring-house in the rear. Chickens and other animals have free run of the premises. Some fish-rods hung in the porch, and hunter's gear depended on hooks in the passage-way to the kitchen. In one room were three beds, in the other two, only one in the kitchen. On the porch was a loom, with a piece of cloth in process. The establishment had the air of taking care of itself. Neither Big Tom nor his wife were at home. Sunday seemed to be a visiting day, and the travelers had met many parties on horseback. Mrs. Wilson was away for a visit of a day or two. One of the sons, who was lounging on the veranda,

was at last induced to put up the horses; a very old woman, who mumbled and glared at the visitors was found in the kitchen, but no intelligible response could be got out of her. Presently a bright little girl, the housekeeper in charge, appeared. She said that her Paw had gone up to her brother's (her brother was just married and lived up the river in the house where Mr. Murchison stayed when he was here) to see if he could ketch a bear that had been rootin' round in the corn-field the night before. She expected him back by sundown — by dark any way. 'Les he'd gone after the bear, and then you could n't tell when he would come.

It appeared that Big Tom was a thriving man in the matter of family. More boys appeared. Only one was married, but four had "got their time." As night approached, and no Wilson, there was a good deal of lively and loud conversation about the stock and the chores, in all of which the girl took a leading and intelligent part, showing a willingness to do her share, but not to have all the work put upon her. It was time to go down the road and hunt up the cows; the mule had disappeared and must be found before dark; a couple of steers had n't turned up since the day before yesterday, and in the midst of the gentle contention as to whose business all this was, there was an alarm of cattle in the corn-patch, and the girl started off on a run in that direction. It was due to the executive ability of this small girl, after the cows had been milked and the mule chased and the boys properly stirred up, that we had supper. It was of the oil-cloth, iron fork, tin spoon, bacon, hot bread and honey variety, distinguished, however, from all meals we had endured or enjoyed before by the introduction of fried eggs (as the breakfast next morning was by the presence of chicken), and it was served by the active maid with right hearty good will and genuine hospitable intent.

While it was in progress, after nine o'clock, Big Tom arrived, and, with a simple greeting, sat down and attacked the supper and began to tell about the bear. There was not much to tell except that he had n't seen the bear, and that, judged by his tracks and his sloshing around, he must be a big one. But a trap had been set for him, and he judged it would n't be long before we had some bear meat. Big Tom Wilson, as he is known all over this part of the State, would not attract attention from his size. He is six feet and two inches tall, very spare and muscular, with sandy hair, long gray beard, and honest blue eyes. He has a reputation for great strength and endurance; a man of native simplicity and mild manners. He had been rather expecting us from what Mr. Murchison wrote; he wrote (his son had read out the letter) that Big Tom was to take good care of us, and anybody that Mr. Murchison sent could have the best he'd got.

Big Tom joined us in our room after supper. This apartment, with two mighty feather beds, was hung about with all manner of stuffy family clothes, and had in one end a vast cavern for a fire. The floor was uneven, and the hearthstones billowy. When the fire was lighted, the effect of the bright light in the cavern and the heavy shadows in the room was Rembrandtish. Big Tom sat with us before the fire and told bear stories. Talk? Why, it was not the least effort. The stream flowed on without a ripple. "Why, the old man," one of the sons confided to us next morning, "can begin and talk right over Mt. Mitchell and all the way back, and never make a break." Though Big Tom had waged a lifelong warfare with the bears, and taken the hide off at least a hundred of them, I could not see that he had any vindictive feeling towards the varmint, but simply an insatiable love of killing him, and he regarded him in that half humorous light in which the

bear always appears to those who study him. As to deer — he could n't tell how many of them he had slain. But Big Tom was a gentle man, he never killed deer for mere sport. With rattlesnakes, now, it was different. There was the skin of one hanging upon a tree by the route we would take in the morning, a buster, he skinned him yesterday. There was an entire absence of braggadocio in Big Tom's talk, but somehow, as he went on, his backwoods figure loomed larger and larger in our imagination, and he seemed strangely familiar. At length it came over us where we had met him before. It was in Cooper's novels. He was the Leather-Stocking exactly. And yet he was an original; for he assured us that he had never read the Leather-Stocking Tales. What a figure, I was thinking, he must have made in the late war! Such a shot, such a splendid physique, such iron endurance! I almost dreaded to hear his tales of the havoc he had wrought on the Union army. Yes, he was in the war, he was sixteen months in the Confederate army, this Homeric man. In what rank? "Oh, I was a fifer!"

But hunting and war did not by any means occupy the whole of Big Tom's life. He was also engaged in "lawin'." He had a long time feud with a neighbor about a piece of land and alleged trespass, and they'd been "lawin'" for years, with no definite result; but as a topic of conversation it was as fully illustrative of frontier life as the bear-fighting.

Long after we had all gone to bed, we heard Big Tom's continuous voice, through the thin partition that separated us from the kitchen, going on to his little boy about the bear; every circumstance of how he tracked him, and what corner of the field he entered, and where he went out, and his probable size and age, and the prospect of his coming again; these were the details of real every-day life, and worthy to be dwelt

on by the hour. The boy was never tired of pursuing them. And Big Tom was just a big boy also in his delight in it all.

Perhaps it was the fascination of Big Tom, perhaps the representation that we were already way off the Big Ivy route, and that it would in fact save time to go over the mountain, and we could ride all the way, that made the Professor acquiesce, with no protest worth noticing, in the preparations that went on, as by a natural assumption, for going over Mitchell. At any rate, there was an early breakfast, luncheon was put up, and by half past seven we were riding up the Caney—a half-cloudy day—Big Tom swinging along on foot ahead, talking nineteen to the dozen. There was a delightful freshness in the air, the dew-laden bushes, and the smell of the forest. In half an hour we called at the hunting shanty of Mr. Murchison, wrote our names on the wall, according to custom, and regretted that we could not stay for a day in that retreat, and try the speckled trout. Making our way through the low growth and bushes of the valley we came into a fine open forest, watered by a noisy brook, and after an hour's easy going reached the serious ascent.

From Wilson's to the peak of Mitchell it is seven and a half miles; we made it in five and a half hours. A bridle path was cut years ago, but it has been entirely neglected. It is badly washed, it is stony, muddy, and great trees have fallen across it which wholly block the way for horses. At these places long detours were necessary, on steep hillsides and through gullies, over treacherous sink-holes in the rocks, through quaggy places, heaps of brush, and rotten logs. Those who have ever attempted to get horses over such ground will not wonder at the slow progress we made. Before we were half-way up the ascent, we realized the folly of attempting it on horseback; but then to go on

seemed as easy as to go back. The way also was exceedingly steep in places, and what with roots, and logs, and slippery rocks and stones, it was a desperate climb for the horses.

What a magnificent forest! Oaks, chestnuts, poplars, hemlocks, the cucumber (a species of magnolia, with a pinkish, cucumber-like cone), and all sorts of northern and southern growths meeting here in splendid array. And this gigantic forest, with little diminution in size of trees, continued two thirds of the way up. We marked, as we went on, the maple, the black walnut, the buckeye, the hickory, the locust, and the guide pointed out in one section the largest cherry-trees we had ever seen; splendid trunks, each worth a large sum if it could be got to market. After the great trees were left behind, we entered a garden of white birches, and then a plateau of swamp, thick with raspberry bushes, and finally the ridges, densely crowded with the funeral black balsam.

Half-way up, Big Tom showed us his favorite, the biggest tree he knew. It was a poplar, or tulip. It stands more like a column than a tree, rising high into the air, with scarcely a perceptible taper, perhaps sixty, more likely a hundred, feet before it puts out a limb. Its girth six feet from the ground is thirty-two feet! I think it might be called Big Tom. It stood here, of course, a giant, when Columbus sailed from Spain, and perhaps some sentimental traveler will attach the name of Columbus to it.

In the woods there was not much sign of animal life, scarcely the note of a bird, but we noticed as we rode along in the otherwise primeval silence a loud and continuous humming overhead, almost like the sound of the wind in pine tops. It was the humming of bees! The upper branches were alive with these industrious toilers, and Big Tom was always on the alert to discover and mark a bee-gum, which he could visit

afterwards. Honey hunting is one of his occupations. Collecting spruce gum is another, and he was continually hacking off with his hatchet knobs of the translucent secretion. How rich and fragrant are these forests! The rhododendron was still in occasional bloom, and flowers of brilliant hue gleamed here and there.

The struggle was more severe as we neared the summit, and the footing worse for the horses. Occasionally it was safest to dismount and lead them up slippery ascents; but this was also dangerous, for it was difficult to keep them from treading on our heels, in their frantic flounderings, in the steep, wet, narrow, brier-grown path. At one uncommonly pokerish place, where the wet rock sloped into a bog, the rider of Jack thought it prudent to dismount, but Big Tom insisted that Jack would "make it" all right, only give him his head. The rider gave him his head, and the next minute Jack's four heels were in the air, and he came down on his side in a flash. The rider fortunately extricated his leg without losing it, Jack scrambled out with a broken shoe, and the two limped along. It was a wonder that the horses' legs were not broken a dozen times.

As we approached the top, Big Tom pointed out the direction, a half mile away, of a small pond, a little mountain tarn, overlooked by a ledge of rock, where Professor Mitchell lost his life. Big Tom was the guide who found his body. That day as we sat on the summit he gave in great detail the story, the general outline of which is well known.

The first effort to measure the height of the Black Mountains was made in 1835, by Professor Elisha Mitchell, professor of mathematics and chemistry in the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Mr. Mitchell was a native of Connecticut, born in Washington, Litchfield County, in 1793; graduated at

Yale, ordained a Presbyterian minister, and was for a time state surveyor; and became a professor at Chapel Hill in 1818. He first ascertained and published the fact that the Black Mountains are the highest land east of the Rocky Mountains. In 1844 he visited the locality again. Measurements were subsequently made by Professor Guyot and by Senator Clingman. One of the peaks was named for the senator (the one next in height to Mitchell is described as Clingman on the state map), and a dispute arose as to whether Mitchell had really visited and measured the highest peak. Senator Clingman still maintains that he did not, and that the peak now known as Mitchell is the one that Clingman first described. The estimates of altitudes made by the three explorers named differed considerably. The height now fixed for Mt. Mitchell is 6711; that of Mt. Washington is 6285. There are twelve peaks in this range higher than Mt. Washington, and if we add those in the Great Smoky Mountains which overtop it, there are some twenty in this State higher than the granite giant of New Hampshire.

In order to verify his statement, Professor Mitchell (then in his sixty-fourth year) made a third ascent in June, 1857. He was alone, and went up from the Swannanoa side. He did not return. No anxiety was felt for two or three days, as he was a good mountaineer, and it was supposed he had crossed the mountain and made his way out by the Caney River. But when several days passed without tidings of him, a search party was formed. Big Tom Wilson was with it. They explored the mountain in all directions unsuccessfully. At length Big Tom separated himself from his companions and took a course in accordance with his notion of that which would be pursued by a man lost in the clouds or the darkness. He soon struck the trail of the wanderer and, following it, discovered Mitchell's body lying in

a pool at the foot of a rocky precipice some thirty feet high. It was evident that Mitchell, making his way along the ridge in darkness or fog, had fallen off. It was the ninth (or the eleventh) day of his disappearance, but in the pure mountain air the body had suffered no change. Big Tom brought his companions to the place, and on consultation it was decided to leave the body undisturbed till Mitchell's friends could be present. There was some talk of burying him on the mountain, but the friends decided otherwise, and the remains, with much difficulty, were got down to Asheville and there interred.

Some years afterwards, I believe at the instance of a society of scientists, it was resolved to transport the body to the summit of Mt. Mitchell; for the tragic death of the explorer had forever settled in the popular mind the name of the mountain. The task was not easy. A road had to be cut, over which a sledge could be hauled, and the hardy mountaineers who undertook the removal were three days in reaching the summit with their burden. The remains were accompanied by a considerable concourse, and the last rites on the top were participated in by a hundred or more scientists and prominent men from different parts of the State. Such a strange cortège had never before broken the silence of this lonely wilderness, nor was ever burial more impressive than this wild interment above the clouds.

We had been preceded in our climb all the way by a huge bear. That he was huge, a lunker, a monstrous old varmint, Big Tom knew by the size of his tracks; that he was making the ascent that morning ahead of us, Big Tom knew by the freshness of the trail. We might come upon him at any moment, he might be in the Garden, was quite likely to be found in the raspberry patch. That we did not encounter him I am convinced was not the fault of Big Tom, but of the bear.

After a struggle of five hours we emerged from the balsams and briers into a lovely open meadow, of lush clover, timothy, and blue grass. We unsaddled the horses and turned them loose to feed in it. The meadow sloped up to a belt of balsams and firs, a steep rocky knob, and climbing that on foot we stood upon the summit of Mitchell at one o'clock. We were none too soon, for already the clouds were preparing for what appears to be a daily storm at this season.

The summit is a nearly level spot of some thirty or forty feet in extent either way, with a floor of rock and loose stones. The stunted balsams have been cut away so as to give a view. The sweep of prospect is vast, and we could see the whole horizon except in the direction of Roan, whose long bulk was enveloped in cloud. Portions of six States were in sight, we were told, but that is merely a geographical expression. What we saw, wherever we looked, was an inextricable tumble of mountains, without order or leading line of direction, — domes, peaks, ridges, endless and countless, everywhere, some in shadow, some tipped with shafts of sunlight, all wooded and green or black, and all in more softened contours than our Northern hills, but still wild, lonesome, terrible. Away in the southwest, lifting themselves up in a gleam of the western sky, the Great Smoky Mountains loomed like a frowning continental fortress, sullen and remote. With Clingman and Gibbs and Holback peaks near at hand and apparently of equal height, Mitchell seemed only a part and not separate from the mighty congregation of giants.

In the centre of the stony plot on the summit lie the remains of Mitchell. To dig a grave in the rock was impracticable, but the loose stones were scooped away to the depth of a foot or so, the body was deposited, and the stones were replaced over it. It was the original intention to erect a monument,

but the enterprise of the projectors of this royal entombment failed at that point. The grave is surrounded by a low wall of loose stones, to which each visitor adds one, and in the course of ages the cairn may grow to a good size. The explorer lies there without name or headstone to mark his awful resting-place. The mountain is his monument. He is alone with its majesty. He is there in the clouds, in the tempests, where the lightnings play and the thunders leap, amid the elemental tumult, in the occasional great calm and silence and the pale sunlight. It is the most majestic, the most lonesome grave on earth.

As we sat there, awed a little by this presence, the clouds were gathering from various quarters and drifting towards us. We could watch the process of thunderstorms and the manufacture of tempests. I have often noticed on other high mountains how the clouds, forming like genii released from the earth, mount into the upper air, and in masses or torn fragments of mist hurry across the sky as to a rendezvous of witches. This was a different display. These clouds came slowly sailing from the distant horizon, like ships on an aerial voyage. Some were below us, some on our level; they were all in well-defined, distinct masses, molten silver on deck, below trailing rain, and attended on earth by gigantic shadows that moved with them. This strange fleet of battle-ships, drifted by the shifting currents, was manœuvring for an engagement. One after another, as they came into range about our peak of observation, they opened fire. Sharp flashes of lightning darted from one to the other; a jet of flame from one leaped across the interval and was buried in the bosom of its adversary; and at every discharge the boom of great guns echoed through the mountains. It was something more than a royal salute to the tomb of the mortal at our feet, for the masses of

cloud were rent in the fray, at every discharge the rain was precipitated in increasing torrents, and soon the vast hulks were trailing torn fragments and wreaths of mist, like the shot-away shrouds and sails of ships in battle. Gradually, from this long range practice with single guns and exchange of broadsides, they drifted into closer conflict, rushed together, and we lost sight of the individual combatants in the general tumult of this aerial war.

We had barely twenty minutes for our observations, when it was time to go, and had scarcely left the peak when the clouds enveloped it. We hastened down under the threatening sky to the saddles and the luncheon. Just off from the summit, amid the rocks, is a complete arbor, or tunnel, of rhododendrons. This cavernous place a Western writer has made the scene of a desperate encounter between Big Tom and a catamount, or American panther, which had been caught in a trap and dragged it there, pursued by Wilson. It is an exceedingly graphic narrative, and is enlivened by the statement that Big Tom had the night before drunk up all the whiskey of the party which had spent the night on the summit. Now Big Tom assured us that the whiskey part of the story was an invention; he was not (which is true) in the habit of using it; if he ever did take any it might be a drop on Mitchell; in fact, when he inquired if we had a flask, he remarked that a taste of it would do him good then and there. We regretted the lack of it in our baggage. But what inclined Big Tom to discredit the Western writer's story altogether was the fact that he never in his life had had a difficulty with a catamount, and never had seen one in these mountains.

Our lunch was eaten in haste. Big Tom refused the chicken he had provided for us, and strengthened himself with slices of raw salt pork, which he cut from a hunk with his clasp-knife.



We caught and saddled our horses, who were reluctant to leave the rich feed, enveloped ourselves in waterproofs, and got into the stony path for the descent just as the torrent came down. It did rain. It lightened, the thunder crashed, the wind howled and twisted the tree-tops. It was as if we were pursued by the avenging spirits of the mountains for our intrusion. Such a tempest on this height had its terrors even for our hardy guide. He preferred to be lower down while it was going on. The crash and reverberation of the thunder did not trouble us so much as the swish of the wet branches in our faces and the horrible road, with its mud, tripping roots, loose stones, and slippery rocks. Progress was slow. The horses were in momentary danger of breaking their legs. For the first hour there was not much descent. In the clouds we were passing over Clingman, Gibbs, and Holdback. The rain had ceased, but the mist still shut off all view, if any had been attainable, and bushes and path were deluged. The descent was more uncomfortable than the ascent, and we were compelled a good deal of the way to lead the jaded horses down the slippery rocks.

From the peak to the Widow Patten's, where we proposed to pass the night, is twelve miles, a distance we rode or scrambled down, every step of the road bad, in five and a half hours. Half-way down we came out upon a cleared place, a farm, with fruit-trees and a house in ruins. Here had been a summer hotel, much resorted to before the war, but now abandoned. Above it we turned aside for the view from Elizabeth rock, named from the daughter of the proprietor of the hotel, who often sat here, said Big Tom, before she went out of this world. It is a bold rocky ledge, and the view from it, looking south, is unquestionably the finest, the most pleasing and picture-like, we found in these mountains. In the foreground is

the deep gorge of a branch of the Swannanoa, and opposite is the great wall of the Blue Ridge (the Blue Ridge is the most capricious and inexplicable system) making off to the Blacks. The depth of the gorge, the sweep of the sky line, and the reposeful aspect of the scene to the sunny south made this view both grand and charming. Nature does not always put the needed dash of poetry into her extensive prospects.

Leaving this clearing and the now neglected spring, where fashion used to slake its thirst, we zigzagged down the mountain-side through a forest of trees growing at every step larger and nobler, and at length struck a small stream, the North Fork of the Swannanoa, which led us to the first settlement. Just at night, — it was nearly seven o'clock, — we entered one of the most stately forests I have ever seen, and rode for some distance in an alley of rhododendrons that arched overhead and made a bower. It was like an aisle in a temple; high overhead was the sombre, leafy roof, supported by gigantic columns. Few widows have such an avenue of approach to their domain as the Widow Patten has.

Cheering as this outcome was from the day's struggle and storm, the Professor seemed sunk in a profound sadness. The auguries which the Friend drew from these signs of civilization of a charming inn and a royal supper did not lighten the melancholy of his mind.

"Alas," he said, —

"Why didst thou promise such a beauteous day,  
And make me travel forth without my cloak,  
To let base clouds o'ertake me in my way,  
Hiding thy bravery in their rotten smoke?  
'T is not enough that through the cloud thou  
break,

To dry the rain on my storm-beaten face,  
For no man well of such a salve can speak  
That heals the wound, and cures not the dis-  
grace:

Nor can thy shame give physic to my grief:  
Though thou repent, yet I have still the loss."

"Loss of what?" cried the Friend, as he whipped up his halting steed.

"Loss of self-respect. I feel humiliated that I consented to climb this mountain."

"Nonsense! You'll live to thank me for it, as the best thing you ever did. It's over and done now, and you've got it to tell your friends."

"That's just the trouble. They'll ask me if I went up Mitchell, and I shall have to say I did. My character for consistency is gone. Not that I care much what they think, but my own self-respect is gone. I never believed I would do it. A man can't afford to lower himself in his own esteem, at my time of life."

The Widow Patten's was only an advanced settlement in this narrow valley on the mountain side, but a little group of buildings, a fence, and a gate gave it the air of a place, and it had once been better cared for than it is now. Few travelers pass that way, and the art of entertaining, if it ever existed, is fallen into desuetude. We unsaddled at the veranda, and sat down to review our adventure, make the acquaintance of the family, and hear the last story from Big Tom. The mountaineer, though wet, was as fresh as a daisy, and fatigue in no wise checked the easy, cheerful flow of his talk. He was evidently a favorite with his neighbors, and not unpleasantly conscious of the extent of his reputation. But he encountered here another social grade. The Widow Patten was highly connected. We were not long in discovering that she was an Alexander. She had been a schoolmate of Senator Vance — "Zeb Vance" he still was to her — and the senator and his wife had stayed at her house. I wish I could say that the supper, for which we waited till nine o'clock, was as "highly connected" as the landlady. It was, however, a supper that left its memory. We were lodged in a detached house, which we had to ourselves, where a roaring wood-fire made amends for other things lacking. It was necessary to

close the doors to keep out the wandering cows and pigs, and I am bound to say that, notwithstanding the voices of the night, we slept there the sleep of peace.

In the morning a genuine surprise awaited us; it seemed impossible, but the breakfast was many degrees worse than the supper; and when we paid our bill, large for the region, we were consoled by the thought that we paid for the high connection as well as for the accommodations. This is a regular place of entertainment, and one is at liberty to praise it without violation of delicacy.

The broken shoe of Jack required attention, and we were all the morning hunting a blacksmith, as we rode down the valley. Three blacksmith's shanties were found, and after long waiting to send for the operator it turned out in each case that he had no shoes, no nails, no iron to make either of. We made a détour of three miles to what was represented as a regular shop. The owner had secured the service of a colored blacksmith for a special job, and was not inclined to accommodate us; he had no shoe, no nails. But the colored blacksmith, who appreciated the plight we were in, offered to make a shoe, and to crib four nails from those he had laid aside for a couple of mules; and after a good deal of delay, we were enabled to go on. The incident shows, as well as anything, the barrenness and shiftlessness of the region. A horseman with whom we rode in the morning gave us a very low estimate of the trustworthiness of the inhabitants. The valley is wild and very pretty all the way down to Colonel Long's, — twelve miles, — but the wretched-looking people along the way live in a wretched manner.

Just before reaching Colonel Long's we forded the stream (here of good size), the bridge having tumbled down, and encountered a party of picnickers

under the trees — signs of civilization ; a railway station is not far off. Colonel Long's is a typical Southern establishment : a white house, or rather three houses, all of one story, built on to each other as beehives are set in a row, all porches and galleries. No one at home but the cook, a rotund, broad-faced woman, with a merry eye, whose very appearance suggested good cooking and hospitality ; the Missis and the children had gone up to the river fishing ; the Colonel was somewhere about the place ; always was away when he was wanted. Guess he 'd take us in, — mighty fine man the Colonel ; and she dispatched a child from a cabin in the rear to hunt him up. The Colonel was a great friend of her folks down to Greenville, they visited here. Law, no, she did n't live here. Was just up here spending the summer, for her health. God-forsaken lot of people up here, poor trash. She would n't stay here a day, but the Colonel was a friend of her folks, the first-est folks in Greenville. Nobody round here she could 'sociate with. She was a Presbyterian, the folks round here mostly Baptists and Methodists. More style about the Presbyterians. Married ? No, she hoped not. She did n't want to support no husband. Got 'nuff to do to take care of herself. That her little girl ? No ; she 'd only got one child, down to Greenville, just the prettiest boy ever was, as white as anybody. How did she what ? reconcile this state of things with not being married and being a Presbyterian ? Sho ! she liked to carry some religion along ; it was mighty handy occasionally, mebbe not all the time. Yes, indeed, she enjoyed her religion.

The Colonel appeared and gave us a most cordial welcome. The fat and merry cook blustered around and prepared a good dinner, memorable for its "light" bread, the first we had seen since Cranberry Forge. The Colonel is in some sense a public man, having been

a mail agent, and a Republican. He showed us photographs and engravings of Northern politicians, and had the air of a man who had been in Washington. This was a fine country for any kind of fruit, apples, grapes, pears ; it needed a little Northern enterprise to set things going. The travelers were indebted to the Colonel for a delightful noonday rest, and with regret declined his pressing invitation to pass the night with him.

The ride down the Swannanoa to Asheville was pleasant, through a cultivated region, over a good road. The Swannanoa is, however, a turbid stream. In order to obtain the most impressive view of Asheville we approached it by the way of Beaucatcher Hill, a sharp elevation a mile west of the town. I suppose the name is a corruption of some descriptive French word, but it has long been a favorite resort of the frequenters of Asheville, and it may be traditional that it is a good place to catch beaux. The summit is occupied by a handsome private residence, and from this ridge the view, which has the merit of "bursting" upon the traveler as he comes over the hill, is captivating in its extent and variety. The pretty town of Asheville is seen to cover a number of elevations gently rising out of the valley, and the valley, a rich agricultural region, well watered and fruitful, is completely inclosed by picturesque hills, some of them rising to the dignity of mountains. The most conspicuous of these is Mt. Pisgah, eighteen miles distant to the southwest, a pyramid of the Balsam range, 5757 feet high. Mt. Pisgah, from its shape, is the most attractive mounain in this region.

The sunset light was falling upon the splendid panorama and softening it. The windows of the town gleamed as if on fire. From the steep slope below came the mingled sounds of children shouting, cattle driven home, and all that hum of

life that marks a thickly peopled region preparing for the night. It was the leisure hour of an August afternoon, and Asheville was in all its watering-

place gayety, as we reined up at the Swannanoa hotel. A band was playing on the balcony. We had reached ice-water, barbers, waiters, civilization.

*Charles Dudley Warner.*

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### BENEATH THE VEIL.

HOODED nun, with veiled eyes,  
In whose life the maiden dies,  
Unto Christ a sacrifice!

Thou that kneelest at the shrine,  
Wedded to the Love Divine,  
Making all its sorrows thine:

Passion's agony and sweat,  
Passion's hour when all forget,  
Passion's cry on Olivet!

On thy brow the crown of sticks,  
On thy lips the gall they mix,  
On thy breast the crucifix!

Masses sung and incense cold,  
Vespers rung and pittance doled,  
Beads in pain at midnight told,

Light of windows dim and quaint,  
Sight of pale and paneled saint,  
Throe of martyr torn and faint,

Are thy joys, O child of prayers!  
Child of sorrows! child of cares!  
Ah, that none *thy* burden shares!

Were I weary, poor, distrest,  
Thou, to give me comfort, rest,  
Wouldst of all thyself divest;

Were I raving, fever-tost,  
Homeless, friendless, spirit-lost,  
Thou wouldst seek me, life the cost;

Were I dying 'mid the dead,  
On the field whence all had fled,  
Thou wouldst lift my wounded head.

Ah, so tender for His sake,  
Living but love's cause to take,  
Thou alone my heart dost break.

Worse am I than travel-worn,  
Worse than needy, sick, forlorn,  
Battle-spent, or sorrow-torn!

Death were not so dolorous  
As to hear thee singing, thus  
Lost to me, the Angelus!

*James Lane Allen.*

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#### ANCIENT AND MODERN GREEK.

THE progress of civilization may be compared to the ancient torch-race. The nations have succeeded one another like the runners. As one sinks exhausted, another grasps the torch and carries it forward. The light brightens and pales, but never quite goes out. The chief interest of the student of history must always be centred on these successive leaders. We wish to know not merely the tale of their brief triumph. It is at least as important to understand their earlier training, and to see how they were fitted for that high honor. Did their very greatness contain within itself the seeds of quick decay, or is their decline due to outward and accidental causes? Can we imitate what was best in their attainment, and yet avoid the rocks on which they made shipwreck?

But the exhausted runners regain the lead no more. When once their chief part is played, their subsequent story is of subordinate interest. Some types of men vanish suddenly, some decay slowly, others are cast in new moulds; but the former glory never returns.

To the Greek we owe far more than to any other of the long line who have handed down the sacred fire. Received by him from the Orient, it grew infinitely brighter and more precious

before it passed from his slowly relaxing hand. Yet even for the Greek the supreme hour of destiny struck but once.

We are eager to know more of the beautiful childhood of the Hellenic race. We are permitted to see, like a landscape revealed by a flash of lightning, the picture of the Homeric age. Then, after centuries of impenetrable darkness, Herodotus unrolls before us the varied scenes of Hellenic life in his day, and something like connected history begins. But as for the long story of their wanderings from the far Aryan home, we can at best only guess it out vaguely from the bits of ethnic history left imbedded and preserved in language, like straws in amber. Where and when they first reached the blue *Ægean*, which was to be the amphitheatre of their exploits; whence they received the first impulse to artistic creation; out of what happy mixture of races, under what combination of sun and sea and air, the Ionian type arose, with its love of beauty, its delight in life, its reverent fearlessness even toward the divine beings; how it happened that the Greek, first of mankind, cast off the fetichistic dread of the blind forces of nature, — all this we can never hope to know. It is not strange

that students, in their eager quest for historic fact, have attempted to analyze those loveliest creations of the Hellenic imagination, the myths; though they may as well attempt to analyze the sunshine and golden haze that still cling unchanged about the capes and islands of the Archipelago, — the sunshine and haze from which the lovely shapes of Kalypso and Leukothea and Thetis sprang, and out of which they still rise for him who brings thither an Hellenic imagination.

But why is our interest in the beginnings of Hellenic history so intense? Why are the inscriptions of Egypt and Babylonia scrutinized so eagerly for the slightest hint of the earlier life of the children of Ion? What gives the highest value to myth and legend, and even to the great tale of Troy itself? Simply this: that these were the first fruits of that race which culminated in the Athens of Perikles, and produced there the poets, orators, architects, and sculptors who are still among our noblest teachers.

All the highest powers of the Greek race found free scope and development in the city of Perikles. Yet even as the roots of that greatness lay deep in the past, so its fruits were largely gathered in the next generations. We are slow to admit that Praxiteles, or Plato, or Demosthenes, merely marks a period of decline; but certainly before the fourth century closes the highest mission of the Greek is done. Henceforth the eyes of the noblest Hellenes themselves are turned in proud regret backward toward the more glorious past. The Greek long continues to play a part in the drama of history, but only the tale from the struggle with the Persian to the last stand against Philip, from Aischylos to Demosthenes, is our κρῆμα ἐς ἀεί, — the one priceless heritage of humanity. With Chaironeia the age of heroes is closed. The rest of the tale is merely one leaf in the vast record of human life.

Above all other men, more even than the Venetian or the Tuscan, the Athenian was an artist, a shaper. The commonest materials could take only forms of delicate symmetry under his hands. Outward nature gains fresh meaning when seen through his eyes. Above all, the life of man rounds into a complete drama, — a thing of beauty, its own sufficient excuse for being.

What is true of all else which the Athenians shaped — their architecture, their sculpture, their tragedy — is peculiarly true of their language. It is the most delicate, harmonious, artistic form of expression that ever lived on the lips of men. When we talk of the study of Greek, we mean, first and chiefly, the dialect and literature of Athens in the fifth and fourth centuries B. C.

As long as men escape from the turmoil of the workaday world, and strive to live the intellectual and contemplative life at all, there will always be some who will reverence what is noble and beautiful in the far-away past. As Socrates says, "The treasures of the wise of old, which they have left recorded in their scrolls, my friends and I unroll and con together, culling whatever good we find, and counting it a great gain, if thereby we grow dear one to another." Perhaps it will not matter so much, after all, if the throng of callow striplings sent up every year to the university shall no longer have made Xenophon's romance of the March to the Sea a *corpus vile* for painful grammatical dissection. It will be just as true as before that an earnest student of language, or of literature, must always find in Attic Greek the very crown and glory, the very heart and soul, of his desire. The true lovers of Greek will hardly be fewer or less earnest. To take a fair parallel case, there are some to whom the great Tuscans are the closest of friends. And how many of those who say to Dante, "Tu sei lo mio maestro e il mio autore!" would wish to hear the Italian tongue



(or even the *Commedia* itself!) taught in every girls' boarding-school, after the same fashion as French is now treated there? Perhaps those who can love the grim Tuscan will be sure to find their way to him; neither he nor Aischylos is within the reach of school-children.

In the endless array of later writers, from Aristotle on, there is no longer anything peculiarly beautiful or noble in the mere form of expression. The life and color have suddenly faded out of words. The syntax is growing stiff and artificial. And the reason is not far to seek. Attic was so strong because it was alive. Its literary forms had their roots deep and firm in the spoken language of the day. We hear at least the echo of that living dialect of the Athenian streets in the lighter Platonic dialogues, in Aristophanes' iambics, in Xenophon's recollections of his master's conversations, in pleas like the first oration of Lysias, which is put into the mouth of a simple peasant. It could not be an ignoble nor a stagnant dialect, any more than Elizabethan English could be; for in it the thoughts and aspirations of a free, enlightened, ambitious people were hourly striking out for themselves fresh and fit forms of expression. It was in this same living dialect, refined and ennobled but living still, that even Oidipous and Antigone appealed straight to the hearts of all Athens.

But the very greatness of Attic helped to check all vigorous growth thereafter. As the life of Hellas became more and more ignoble, its dialects inevitably shared in the general decline. They were by no means incapable of cultivation, as the example of Theokritos sufficiently proves. But the writers chose instead to ape the Attic masters. In thus becoming the universal literary model, Attic became conventional and artificial; that is, dead! Any one who has occasion to read much Greek of,

say, the second century A. D. must feel that most of it is as artificial, and not half so clever, as the Attic of Professor Jebb. Even at its best, in Lucian, we have simply a laborious, scholarly patchwork, made up by studying ancient authors. Of course Pausanias the traveler, for example, could read a whole library of classics now lost; and besides his avowed quotations, he overflows with precious material drawn from them. But his own Greek, as Greek, is poor, clumsy stuff. He cannot handle it easily enough to make himself intelligible; not because he is dull or ignorant, but because he is trying to compose in a dead language.

There is no need to continue further on a line of argument which no Philhellene enjoys following. Even in Byzantine Greek there is a ghastly likeness to Greek. A mummy is horribly human still. A race that, sinking lower and lower with the centuries, became the slaves of the Roman, the Venetian, and at last of the Ottoman, could not but drag its language down with it into that utter degradation.

Nevertheless, the existence of the Greek race and language on the shores and islands of the Levant has been an unbroken one down to our own time. This of itself, to men of mixed blood and recent national origin like ourselves, is a strange and stirring thought. The *Ægean* was a Greek lake thirty centuries ago. It is essentially a Greek lake to-day. The Hellenic race amalgamated readily with many of the races with which it came in contact; but eventually they were all assimilated, and the resulting type was Hellenic still. It is not to be denied that Phœnician, Carian, Macedonian, Roman, Slavic, Venetian blood flows in the veins of the *Ægean* islanders: but they are all Greeks, nevertheless.

This is also true of the language. Though it has of course borrowed words,

the substructure and frame have remained Hellenic. The changes have been many and radical. It has reached an advanced stage of disintegration and decay, but those changes, that decay, have come almost wholly from within. Nor has the consciousness of a nobler past ever been wholly ground out of the people. Even in the bitterest degradation of Turkish slavery the Rayahs have at least held firm to the Orthodox Greek Church; and in the monasteries and among the higher clergy some faint sparks of classical culture still lingered. All this did not, indeed, keep the various dialects of the Levant from sinking to their natural level. They became — some of them still are — the rude, meagre *patois* which the serfs of the Ottoman would naturally employ; but they were not driven out, nor radically affected, by the language of their conquerors. When the effort to educate the Romaic Rayahs and revive a national spirit began, under Koraës' lead, a hundred years ago, the natural way to fashion a uniform language was to return to somewhat older forms, — or, perhaps more truly, to teach the people the written language of the more cultivated. This effort to push their language backward has indeed been carried to a ridiculous and unnatural extent in more recent times, as we shall see. Even at the beginning, the golden opportunity to introduce a simple phonetic spelling should have been seized. The so-called diphthongs, the three accents, and other pedantic lumber should have been thrown overboard once for all. But in itself the movement of Koraës was not only patriotic, it was natural and necessary.

The wonderful awakening of intelligence which began then has continued to the present day, gathering strength steadily, as the grasp of the Turk relaxes and the Christian islanders multiply and grow prosperous: and always their strongest desire is to get rid of their provincial *patois* and master a dia-

lect intelligible to all, — the dialect of free Greece.

Our first acquaintance with living Greeks was in Mitylene, where they greatly outnumber the Turks and are exceptionally prosperous. We were filled with wonder that, despite the heavy and vexatious taxes levied on them by the Turks, they could support their local church, hospital, and other organized charities, and still devote so much money and energy to the education of their children. Among the Rayahs of Mitylene are many educated gentlemen. Their gymnasium is thoroughly organized, and apparently carried on by competent scholarly teachers. What we saw there is to be seen in all the larger islands where Greeks are numerous and prosperous. Afterward, in the interior of Lesbos, in cities of the mainland like Pergamon, and especially in little villages of the Troad, we came to know a much humbler and a more ignorant class of Rayahs. But everywhere there was the same craving for knowledge. A ragged, grizzly old fellow, almost a beggar, who had spent a number of hours in guiding us to the ruins of "Chigri," refused to accept money, but begged us, when we reached Athens, to send him a book from which his little boy could learn "the good Greek." The dialects which these Rayahs are so eager to abandon are of course debased and meagre; they are overloaded with Turkish and Italian words; but so far as we could get to understand them the bulk of the roots seemed still of recognizable Hellenic origin.

The little kingdom of Greece, and especially the University of Athens, is naturally enough the heart of this growing intellectual life. Thither hundreds of the young islanders flock to complete their education. This current to and from Athens is of course utilized also as a means of political agitation, and throughout the Ægean the insular

Greeks look forward to the day which shall unite them to the subjects of King George. In this truly national movement there is much hope for the future. Like the other Christian races who are or have been for centuries held captive by the Turkish army of occupation in Southeastern Europe and Asia Minor, the Greeks are organizing to fill the place of their captors, when their rule shall be allowed to break down. Even the jealousy of the great powers cannot forever prop the fallen strength nor prolong the slow death of the sick man of Europe; and whenever the day long expected shall come, it will be well if the Rayah races are enlightened, united, and courageous enough to hold firmly as freemen the lands they have so long dwelt in as slaves. Perhaps even the wildest dream of Greek national pride may yet be realized, and Constantinople, the bone of contention of the European powers, become the capital of a confederacy of the Christian races once subject to Ottoman tyranny: and of that league the Greeks may yet prove themselves worthy to hold the hegemony.

Unhappily, this young national life has not been allowed to develop naturally. A good deal of the mischief has been done by the sentimental Philhellenes. Much of Byron's poetry is an example of what we mean. They insist upon seeing in the uprising in the Morea and the foundation of Otho's little kingdom a miraculous resurrection of the "glorious Greeks of old." This sentimental fancy has actually invaded the diplomatic world, and has been persistently advanced (and no less seriously combated) as the ground of Greece's claim to freedom and protection from her old masters.

Now to the modern Greek himself this feeling is utterly unnatural, and indeed hardly intelligible. Slave or free, he is a true son of the Rayahs. His tastes, his aspirations, his faults, his be-

liefs, his language, are theirs. He hates the Turk with a perfect hatred, and longs to be lord where he has cringed and cowered so long. His Homer is the ballads of the Klephts (the brigands who from the fifteenth century on took to the mountains and defied the Ottoman, who was absolute lord of the coast and plain). He is attached to the organization and ritual of the Orthodox Greek Church, because it was the one bond of national union through the bitter past, and is still the strongest tie between enslaved and free Greece to-day. But the Hellenic past beyond that is infinitely more remote and unreal to him than it is to ourselves. Indeed, there is something pitiful in our earnest seeking, with Byron at the van, for the heirs of our Greeks in the Orient of to-day. We ourselves of the Occident are their heirs in the only possible sense. On Keats and Shelley and Byron himself the mantle of Anakreon and Simonides falls.

But the nineteenth-century Greek has at least this much of the blood of Odysseus and Themistokles in his veins: he is never slow to see his own advantage, and use the foibles of other men for securing it. Too weak, even if brave enough, to carve out a future for himself with the sword, perceiving clearly that only the capricious good-will of the powers can make him strong, he is quite ready, for that good end, to pose as the living representative of the Athenian of Perikles' day. (Indeed, the removal of the capital to Athens is hardly defensible on any other than this sentimental ground.) The whole play is largely a farce in his eyes. The enthusiastic Philhellene is a benevolent madman to him, but a madman whom it is worth while to humor. He has learned that the Occidental pilgrim will welcome a fine old classical Greek word as enthusiastically as a rare old coin, and is quite ready to pay full value for both. If you ask an Athenian the Greek equiv-

alent for an English word, he holds it his patriotic duty to give you the very best, that is to say, the very oldest word he knows; and he makes himself and you believe that if it is not now the expression in ordinary use it ought to be, it soon will be, and any way every intelligent Greek would understand it perfectly. Even the shepherd boy on the Arcadian hills is catching the trick, and if you ask the name for his donkey he answers, "Well, we say *gathouráki*, but the good word is *onos*!"

Of course we do not mean to say that the revival of classical and archaeological studies in modern Greece has no higher motive than this. There is much real love of study there, and ancient Greek is as naturally the centre and backbone of all philology for them, is as absolutely essential to the comprehension of their vernacular, as Latin is for the Italians. Moreover, the actor always identifies himself more or less with his *rôle*. They themselves have come almost to believe that after all they can offer us a pretty good revival, if not survival, of the character, the manners, and particularly of the language of Periklean Athens.

The effect of all this on their language is peculiarly disastrous. The educated and half-educated Athenians, and especially the newspaper writers, are engaged in a frantic attempt to back their unwilling vernacular off toward a supposed classical stage (of which they have no real comprehension), at the rate of about a century every year. Of course the natural result follows. They are pulling their literary language up by the roots. However delightful and intelligible this jargon may be to the sentimental pilgrim to Athene's shrine or Paul's pulpit, it is utterly meaningless to the honest native mechanic, tradesman, and sailor. As we have said, this is being done, at least partly, in good faith and earnest. If you ask a fairly educated young Greek about his lan-

guage, he will talk to you as fluently and almost as sincerely as Dr. Schliemann or Professor Blackie, in about this strain:—

"You are dreaming in the Occident that the classical Greek language is dead. You should come to us and learn that it is yet living. It has indeed cast off a few antiquated cumbrous forms,—the dual number, the  $\mu$  conjugation, the middle voice; but that has only renewed its vigor. The few Italian and Turkish words which disfigured it have long ago been driven out. You need only spend a few months in acquiring it from living Greeks, and you will then read Xenophon and Herodotos without any drudgery, and will see that our language and classical Attic are essentially identical. All Greek literature will be alive to you as it never was before. Only you must first unlearn your horrible Erasmian pronunciation, and speak Greek as the Greeks do and always have. Surely we know best how to speak our own language!"

It is the song of the Sirens! It promises us the lost youth of the world again!

Our own conviction we shall state frankly. Languages, like almost everything else, are made over from older elements. As fast as words are needed, they are borrowed and adapted, not created. But there are no miraculous survivals in this world. The heroic spirit of free Greece is separated from us by many centuries of slow decay, and finally by three or four of the lowest degradation. If the ancient language had indeed survived to our day, it would be a millstone about the neck of a modern people. But it is not true; for a language can live only upon the lips of those who speak it as the natural expression of their thoughts and aspirations. The spirit of it fled at once when Freedom perished. Slow decay sapped its foundations year by year ever after. From the crumbled materials the de-

generate Rayahs easily shaped the dialects that answered to their humble needs.

Out of that fiery furnace of slavery a young national life has come forth. If it is a vigorous and stable existence, if it can develop unfettered by any foreign dictation, whether ancient or modern, German or Hellenic, the Future belongs to it: but "*pas de rêves, messieurs*," the Past belongs to the dead. Neither Constantinople, nor greatness in any form, will ever fall to them on sentimental grounds, as the heirs of old Hellas.

And as for their language, it should keep its foundations deep and firm in the living speech of their folk. Let worn-out and meaningless pedantries go. As fast as new words are really needed, let them use the materials of the ancient language as from a quarry, not imagining the stately structure still stands, either intact or slightly out of repair. If then great authors finally arise to shape their living idiom into forms of permanent literary value, their life will have become a part of the intellectual life of mankind.

It is well known that Dante began the composition of his poem in Latin. He loved the past as only the scholar and the poet can; but he had a stirring message to speak to living men, and he saw, reluctantly but clearly, that he must use the words of the present. Done into the language of Virgil, the *Commedia* would have passed long ago to the same limbo with the epics on which Petrarca built his hopes of immortal fame. Cast in the mould of the *lingua volgare*, it helped to create in Italy a more vigorous, because a more native, literature than that of Rome, and has vitally influenced poetic forms ever since.

It is fortunate that the loftiest of the poets has thus recorded his perception of the truth, that a great poem can be cast only in the mould of a living lan-

guage. A man can speak to the after-world only in his mother-tongue.

The question is often asked us, Is it worth while to learn modern Greek as an introduction to the study of the ancient tongue? Perhaps the remaining paragraphs of this necessarily rambling essay may be best grouped into an answer to this query.

In the first place, the problem is a double one. Do you mean the "newspaper Greek," which is cultivated at Athens for the especial edification of foreigners, or do you mean the living language of the common people throughout the Levant?

The native teacher in Athens will attempt to teach you a sort of semi-classical lingo, which he himself neither could nor would use to his own servants, his own children, or even to his friends in the public café. He will write verses for the *Αἶών* in it, but of an evening with his family he will sing, not them, but the *Κλεφτικά*. He will do his petty best to hold high converse with you in this style.

But we think it perfectly clear that, if the resuscitation of the ancient conversational idiom is worth attempting at all, it should be tried, like Latin, in the Seminar of a German university. Adolf Kirchhoff would laugh grimly at the thought of attempting such an exploit; and the best native Greek scholars may and do sit humbly at his feet for instruction in classical philology.

That is something which cannot be reiterated too plainly. We have abundant reason to be grateful to the race that upheld the slow-dying Byzantine empire, and so preserved through the Middle Ages the few fragmentary records of the old Greek world which have been transmitted to us. But when the fugitives from the Ottoman conqueror brought to Italy, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the precious manu-

scripts which they could no longer read appreciatively, their last service to learning was done. Like Pheidippides, they had only breath to pant out their message as they fell dying at our feet. There are Greeks in professorial chairs at Athens who have a goodly share of classical learning, but they acquired it where all must, in Berlin and Leipzig and Bonn. The assumption of some half-educated Greeks that they are the best classical teachers because they were born in the Levant is an audacious bit of conscious charlatanism.

We said the question was a double one, and the other side of it can be discussed in much better humor. Is it well to make one's self familiar with the colloquial Romaic of ordinary life in the Levant as a preparation for the study of classical Attic?

Now, however highly we may value the Spanish, French, or Italian language, no one thinks of making any one of them the regular introduction to the study of Latin. The resemblances between mother and daughters must in any case attract the notice of the duller pupil. But when the time for any comparative linguistic study has arrived, the ancient language, with its complete and tolerably regular structure, must come first. Then the process of phonetic decay through which the Romance languages were formed may be described and exemplified in such a manner as to lighten materially the labor of acquiring the living languages.

All this is equally true of the Romaic dialects of the Eastern Mediterranean, with the important addition that they have as yet no literary development which should make them worth studying for their own sake. The manner in which they have worked over the materials of the ancient language is very instructive. The parallelism between this process and the growth of the Romance

languages out of Latin is often very striking. But after all, this belongs to the science of comparative philology. Delightful and profitable as that science is, it demands special tastes and lifelong devotion. It can hardly be said to enter as an essential study into the scheme even of the higher education. If it be admitted there, it forces upon us first problems much nearer home; namely, the origin of our own language, and of its half-sisters on both the Teutonic and the Romance side.

The decayed and mutilated forms, the modern syntax, the humbler conceptions and aspirations, of the Romaic dialects make them the worst possible introduction to the language of Plato and Sophokles. We must always begin with the noblest and most highly developed form of the noblest of languages. Our young students should be soaked in Attic, in Xenophon and Lysias and the easier parts of Plato, until the language begins to live again for them, — until they can read, for instance, the opening scene of the Republic aloud for the first time, and feel in it the charm of perfect simplicity and ease and grace. This is Greek at its best: and the best is never too good for the beginner.

As for all the later history, whether of the people or of the language, it belongs almost exclusively to the special student. To the philologist it is a rich field. His clue through all the mazes of his task must always be that wonderful truth, — the existence of the Greek race and language on the shores and islands of the *Ægean* has been unbroken for thirty centuries; and if either the student or the Oriental traveler wishes to acquire a living dialect, more than half his labor will be spared if he already has a good knowledge of Greek, and studies Romaic comparatively, just as we master Italian after Latin.

*William Cranston Lavton.*



## THE POETIC ELEMENT IN THE MEDIÆVAL DRAMA.

THERE exists, perhaps, no literature of any importance which is to-day less generally read for its own sake, apart from any antiquarian interest, than that bequeathed to us by the Middle Ages. Resulting as it does from the period of intense activity which followed the secular revival of the thirteenth century, it furnishes examples of nearly every literary form, from the epic to the drama, and reflects every phase of that extraordinary era, from its tragedy to its fun; yet it is, as a rule, contentedly ignored and relinquished to the researches of a few enthusiastic scholars.

The peculiarity of the language furnishes without doubt a partial explanation of this popular indifference. Mediæval French and English are alike just far enough removed from modern forms to render them perplexing, while at the same time they do not possess the mysterious charm offered by an entirely novel mode of expression. But a truer reason is found in the distance which separates the modern from the mediæval world, — a distance far greater, measured by any standard except that of time, than that which lies between us and the literature of Greece and Rome. Affiliated on one side to the dreamy metaphysics of the East, on the other to the uncompromising positivism of the Roman decadence, the thought of our own day has little sympathy with childlike straightforwardness or unquestioning delight in the present. Yet contrast is sometimes refreshing; and a generation which has listened to the *Rubáiyát* may find in some of the old English lyrics a freshness and genuineness of tone, a quaint sincerity of utterance, that have their own peculiar charm.

It is the intention of the writer to present some of these poetic bits, taken from a field which is for this purpose

almost unsearched. The Mysteries and Miracle Plays of the Middle Ages differ from most of its other literature in that they are not, like the poems of Chaucer, written for a cultivated class, but for the people at large. Their aim, therefore, is not literary; and whatever merit may be found in them is the inevitable result of the ideas by which they were inspired. Originally a mere extension of the liturgy, and performed for a long while within the cathedral itself, their design remained to the end the presentation, in a vivid and attractive form, of the whole story of God's dealing with man. They consist, accordingly, of a paraphrase, more or less literal, of the biblical narrative, and it was in the elaboration of those episodes which appealed particularly to the emotions of the time that the mind of the poet had free scope. Here, for instance, is a passage from Mary Magdalen's address to the Saviour at the house of Simon, which is a good specimen of the average style and the most common metre of the dramas: —

“ Welcome, my lovely lord of leal,  
Welcome, my heart, welcome in heal,  
Welcome, all my worldës heal,  
My boote,<sup>1</sup> and all my bliss;  
From thee, Lord, may I not conceal  
My filth and my faultës frail,  
Forgive me that my flesh so frail  
To thee hath done amiss.”

Often, however, the lyrical interludes reach a much higher note, and show a musical instinct, strong if as yet unelaborated.

Here is a fragment taken from the Chester Plays, and belonging probably to the first half of the fifteenth century. It is the song of the Saviour on Easter morning: —

“ Earthly man whom I have wrought,  
Awake out of thy sleep;  
Earthly man whom I have bought,  
Of me thou take no keep;

<sup>1</sup> Prayer.

From Heaven man's soul I sought  
 Out of a dungeon deep,  
 My dear leman thence I brought,  
 For ruth of her I weep ;  
 I am very king of peace,  
 And lord of free mercy ;  
 Who will of sinners have release  
 On me they call and cry,  
 And if they will from sinners cease,  
 I give them peace truly."

Many of these little lyrics have about them a singular sweetness and freshness. They stand in one way almost alone in our literature, or at least in our religious poetry. Allied by their quaint and simple grace to the later work of Herbert, they differ from his entirely in their spirit ; for they contain no hint of Herbert's constant though varied theme, — the experience of the individual soul. The age of introspection was not yet ; and indeed it is strange to think how little of our religious verse has a purely objective inspiration. By their subjects, therefore, these little poems approach more nearly to such works as Milton's Ode to the Nativity ; but it is hard to compare with Milton's superbly skillful mosaic the unforced, spontaneous snatches of song which are scattered through the mediæval drama. To talk of relative merits would be as pointless as gravely to discuss the contrast between the singing of a thrush and that of Madame Patti ; but listen for a moment to the one after the other.

Here is Milton's description of the light which appeared to the shepherds :

"At last surrounds their sight  
 A globe of circular light,  
 That with long beams the shamefast night ar-  
 ray'd ;  
 The helm'd cherubim  
 And sword'd seraphim  
 Are seen in glittering ranks with wings dis-  
 play'd ;  
 Harping in loud and solemn quire,  
 With unexpressive notes, to Heaven's new-born  
 heir.

"Such music (as 't is said),  
 Before was never made,  
 But when of old the sons of morning sung ;  
 While the Creator great  
 The constellations set,  
 And the well-balanced world on hinges hung,

And cast the dark foundations deep,  
 And bid the weltring waves their oozy channel  
 keep."

Here is part of a version of the same scene, half lyrical, half dramatic, from the Chester Plays. The shepherds are interrupted by the light, while chattering in a realistic way about their affairs :

FIRST SHEPHERD.

"What is all this light here  
 That blacks so bright here  
 On my black beard ?  
 For to see this light here  
 A man may be afright here,  
 For I am feared.

SECOND SHEPHERD.

"Such a sight seeming  
 And a light leeming<sup>1</sup>  
 Sets me to look ;  
 All to my deeming  
 From a star streaming  
 It to me strook.

THIRD SHEPHERD.

"Fellows will we  
 Kneel down on our knee  
 After comfort,  
 To the true Trinity  
 For to lead us to see  
 Our elder's Lord."

While they are praying, the angels appear and sing the Gloria, and the shepherds resume : —

FIRST SHEPHERD.

"Fellows in fear,  
 May you not hear  
 This muttering on height ?

SECOND SHEPHERD.

"A glóre and a glere,  
 Yet no man was near  
 Within our sight.

THIRD SHEPHERD.

"What song was that, say ye,  
 That he sang to us all three ?  
 Expounded shall it be  
 Ere we hence pass.  
 For I am oldest in degree,  
 And also best, as seemeth me : —  
 It was glóre glarë with a glee,  
 It was neither more nor less.

FIRST SHEPHERD.

"Nay, it was glory, glory, glorious,  
 Methought that note rang over all the house ;  
 A seemly man he was, and curious ;  
 But soon away he was.

<sup>1</sup> Shining.

## SECOND SHEPHERD.

"Nay, it was glory glory with a glo,  
And much of celis was thereto.  
\* \* \*

## THIRD SHEPHERD.

"By God! It was a gloria  
Said Gabriel when he began so,  
He had a much better voice than I have  
As in heaven all others have so.  
\* \* \*

Yet and he sang more too,  
From my heart it shall not start,  
He sang also A Deo  
Methought healed my heart.  
\* \* \*

## FIRST SHEPHERD.

"Now pray we to him with good intent,  
And sing I will, and we embrace,  
That he will let us to be bente  
And to send us of his grace."

The whole story of the Nativity appealed strongly to the imagination of the Middle Ages. Again and again it is lovingly dwelt on, and the little touches which are added are almost always harmonious with the spirit of the Gospels. From the star by which the Wise Men are guided smiles down on them the face of the infant Jesus; when the child is born, Joseph holds him up tenderly, that he may be warmed by the breath of the friendly animals. Various pretty representations of this scene occur in illuminated manuscripts, where the ox and ass — always painted, for some inscrutable reason, bright red and blue respectively — rub their noses in the most affectionate and kindly way over the babe. It is touching to see with what joyful yet reverential awe these plays, written as they were for the people, and reflecting perfectly popular sentiment and taste, insist upon the humble birth of our Saviour, in an age when the middle and lower classes were regarded as almost beneath contempt. "Yet do I marvel," says one of the prophets who, with charming inconsistency, are discussing the birth of Christ,

"Yet do I marvel  
In what pile or castle  
These herdsmen did him see.

## SECOND PROPHET.

"Neither in hall nor yet in bowers  
Born would he not be;  
Neither in castles nor in towers  
That seemly were to see.  
But at his father's will,  
The prophecy to fulfil,  
Between an ox and ass  
Jesu this king born he was,  
Heaven he bring us till!"

All the love and tenderness for childhood, which manifests itself to-day in a hundred different forms, seemed in the Middle Ages to be concentrated in adoration of the infant Redeemer. Mary's treatment of the Child, in particular, is rendered with the most sympathetic delicacy. In the York Plays, for instance, immediately after the birth, she kneels to the child, saying, —

"Hail, my lord God! Hail, Prince of Peace,  
Hail, my father, and hail, my son,"

and then proceeds to implore him, with an awe touched by pity and by motherly love: —

"Son, as I am simple subject of thine,  
Vouchsafe, sweet son, I pray thee,  
That I might take thee in these arms of mine,  
And in this poor weed to array thee.  
Grant me this bliss,  
As I am thy mother chosen to be  
In sooth fastness."

So she takes him on her lap; and presently Joseph, who has been out gathering fuel, enters, and exclaims, —

"Oh Marie! What sweet thing is that upon thy knee?"

She explains the matter to him; and then they unite in worshiping this "flower fairest of hue," the "royal king, root of all right."

But perhaps this wistful reverence of infancy is even more striking in the case of the shepherds. The treatment of these men is thoroughly realistic ("Whew! Golly!" exclaims one of them, when the vision of heavenly light first breaks upon him), and the scenes where they appear are usually made the occasion for a good deal of rough buffoonery. The delightful literalness of the period saw nothing incongruous in the angel's message coming as interrup-

tion to an angry squabble concerning the ownership of a sheep. But as soon as the shepherds come in contact with the Child their coarseness and vulgarity give place to the prettiest mixture of adoration and of loving familiarity. Very simple and graceful in all its different versions is the scene where they present their gifts to the Holy Child. Here is the speech of one of the shepherd-boys, in the Chester Plays:—

"Now, child, altho' thou be comen of God,  
And be God thyself, in thy manhood,  
Yet I know that in thy childhood  
Thou wilt for sweet-meat look,  
To pull down apples, pears and plums,  
Old Joseph shall not need to hurt his thumbs  
Because thou hast not plenty of crumbs,  
I give thee here my nut-hook."

And here is a complete lyric from the Towneley Series, which, coming as it does after a scene of vulgar brawling and joking, has in the original drama a wonderfully dainty effect. The manuscript of these plays, which dates from the reign of Henry VII., is the oldest we possess.

## FIRST SHEPHERD.

"Hail, comely and clean! Hail, young child!  
Hail, maker as I mean of a maiden so mild.  
Thou hast waryd,<sup>1</sup> I wene, the warlo<sup>2</sup> so wild,  
The false giver of teen, now goes he beguiled.  
Lo, he merries!  
Lo, he laughs, my sweeting!  
I have holden my heting.<sup>3</sup>  
Have a bob of cherries.

## SECOND SHEPHERD.

"Hail, sovereign Saviour, for thou hast us  
bought!  
Hail, frely foyde<sup>4</sup> and flower, that all things  
hast wrought!  
Hail, full of favor, that made all of nought!  
Hail! I kneel and I cower. A bird have I  
brought  
To my bairn.  
Hail, little tiny mop,<sup>5</sup>  
Of our creed thou art crop,  
I would drink in thy cup,  
Little day-star.

## THIRD SHEPHERD.

"Hail, darling dear, full of godhead;  
I pray thee be near when that I have need.  
Hail! Sweet is thy cheer. My heart would be  
bleed

<sup>1</sup> Conquered.<sup>2</sup> Wizard.<sup>3</sup> Promise.<sup>4</sup> Noble child.<sup>5</sup> Head.

To see thee sit here in so poor weed  
With no pennies.

Hail! Put forth thy dalle,<sup>6</sup>  
I bring thee but a ball,  
Have, and play thee withal,  
And go to the tennis."

It is a pity that the necessary modernizing of the spelling should ruin several of the rhymes, and entail a great loss in the rhythmical grace of the original. In form, as in matter, this little lyric is almost perfect.

These shepherd songs are the earliest examples in the drama of the frequent invocations of Christ, which, introduced on every possible occasion, remind us forcibly by their character of the liturgical origin of the Miracle Plays. A fine example of these poems is found in the York Series, recently brought out by Miss Toulmin-Smith. It is the chant with which the citizens of Jerusalem greet the Saviour on the morning of Palm Sunday. Allied in form to the last given lyric, it yet offers a strong and suggestive contrast by the subdued and solemn dignity of its movement. The gradual development of the theme throughout the eight verses is beautiful; but a few brief extracts only can be given here:—

## SECOND CITIZEN.

"Hail! flourishing flower that never shall fade,  
Hail! violet vernal with sweet odour,  
Hail! mark of mirth our medicine made,  
Hail! blossom bright, hail, our succour.  
Hail! King comely.

## FOURTH CITIZEN.

"Hail! blissful babe, in Beth'lem born,  
Hail! boote<sup>7</sup> of all our bitter bales,<sup>8</sup>  
Hail! sage that shaped both eve and morn,  
Hail! talker trustful of true tales,  
Hail! comely knight.

## SIXTH CITIZEN.

"Hail! conqueror, hail! most of might,  
Hail! ransom of sinful all,  
Hail! pitiful, hail! lovely light,  
Hail! to us welcomè be shall,  
Hail! King of Jews."

It is well known that the glorious Angel Chorus in the Prologue to Faust

<sup>6</sup> Hand.<sup>7</sup> Remedy.<sup>8</sup> Sufferings.

was taken almost directly from an old *Mistère*. Unfortunately, the French of the best version that I have seen is so antiquated as to be generally unintelligible. This particular chorus does not seem to appear in English, although the parallel between the plays of the two countries is closely marked, and the English are often a mere translation of the French. Indeed, it is only within the last three centuries that schools of literature, distinct in aim and method, have developed themselves in the various countries of Europe. During the Middle Ages, types of national character had not yet been sharply defined, and all Europe formed one great commonwealth, animated by the same ideas, and possessing in common both its literature and its art. The Teutonic nations, however, confine themselves as a rule to scenes for which the warrant may be found in Scripture, while the Celts lay much greater stress on the many graceful legends which filled the gaps and bound together the parts of the Bible story. Some of these legends are very poetic, and merit, perhaps, a moment's passing notice. Here, for instance, is the beginning of the elaborate myth concerning the Tree of Life. The version is taken from Mr. Edwin Norris's translation of a Cornish drama, dating presumably from the fourteenth century. Seth, sent to Paradise by the dying Adam in search of the oil of mercy, protests that he does not know the way.

*"Adam.* Follow the prints of my feet, burnt. No grass nor flower in the world grows in that same road where I went. . . . I and thy mother surely also. . . .

*"Seth* (at the gate of Paradise). All the beauty that I saw, the tongue of man can tell it never. . . . In it there is a tree, high, with many boughs; but they are all bare, without leaves. And around it, bark there was none, from the stem to the head. All its boughs are bare. And at the bottom when I

looked, I saw its roots, even into Hell descending, in midst of great darkness, and its branches growing up even to Heaven, high in light; and it was without bark altogether, from the head to the boughs.

*"Cherub.* Look yet again within. . . . Dost thou see more now than what there was, just now?

*"Seth.* There is a serpent in the tree, an ugly beast, without fail.

*"Cherub.* Go yet the third time to it, and look better in the tree. Look, what you can see in it besides roots and branches.

*"Seth.* O Cherub, angel of the God of grace, in the tree I saw, high up in the branches, a little child newly-born; and he was swathed in cloths and bound fast in napkins.

*"Cherub.* The Son of God was it whom thou sawest like a little child swathed. He will redeem Adam thy father with his flesh, and blood too, when the time is come. . . . He is the oil of mercy which was promised to thy father."

These plays of Cornwall and Brittany are further distinguished by an entire absence of the comic element, and by a curious liking for discussion. The argument of Judas, after the betrayal, with the Fury sent by Satan to torment him finds its key-note in Judas' aggrieved exclamation: "I ask then first of all: Why did God create me to be damned on His account?" and covers with a good deal of force the whole question of predestination. A more attractive example is found in the scene between Jesus and Mary before the Passion, where the courteous tenderness of each speaker towards the other is very gracefully rendered. A brief extract will suffice to show the profound deference paid to logic. Mary, having entreated her Son in vain that he would not sacrifice himself for the human race, begs that she may at least be permitted to die before witnessing his torments. To

this Jesus replies with the following ingenious bit of reasoning:—

“You must, dear Mother, follow sweetly the road of patience. You are to be refused again, for it would not be proper that you should be seen to die before me, and to leave this world the first.

“I will tell you the reason. When the first sin was committed by Father Adam, . . . he was punished, and Paradise was shut up, as it is still ;

“And no one, whoever he be, will ever enter there, until my cruel death has satisfied God the Father.

“Now, my very holy Mother, examine the case. Never did you commit the shadow of a sin. If you were to die, alas ! you must see yourself that it would be a serious matter for your immaculate soul not to be admitted into Heaven, pure as it is.

“Where then could it go to wait for me ? For, more than all other souls, it must endure no pains of hell ; on the contrary, it must immediately take its place on the throne of fidelity.”

Mary admits the force of the argument, but prays that at all events she may be stupefied, so as not to realize what is happening. But this too Christ gently refuses, saying,—

“My Mother, listen well to this. . . . It would not be suitable that you should be seen without pity at my Passion ; no, that would not be in accordance with Reason. . . .

“I say to you then, dear Mother, resign yourself serenely, and think to console your beautiful soul in God, the King of the Stars.”

We find in this scene much more of an attempt at characterization than is common in the dramas, as well as a more dignified and quieter style. The mediæval artist had not yet learnt the rule of restraint and suggestion, and his treatment of strong emotion is hence almost ludicrously inadequate. Especially marked is the failure to delineate evil,

either in demons or men,—a failure perhaps traceable to that curious mental attitude which, while profoundly impressed with awe of the supernatural, was yet never able to escape a sense of the absurdity of sin. The doggerel direction to the guild whose office it was at Chester to manage the episode of the Temptation represents fairly enough the average conception of the Prince of Darkness.

“And next to you butchers of this citie,  
The story of Satan, that Christ needs must tempt,  
Set forth as accustomed have ye,  
The devil in his feathers, all ragged and rent.”

It is therefore not surprising to find in the Breton play already quoted—which, as has been said, is noticeable for its lack of humor—the only really fine rendering of the effect of guilt. In the scene where Judas hangs himself, having given his soul to the devil, the long struggle in which the poor man consecrates himself to the powers of darkness is treated with real power of shuddering insight, and rises at times into a grotesque gloom which recalls the Inferno. It is impossible to reproduce the effect of this passage in a translation ; but the following fragments may at least suggest the original :—

“Demons, detestable demons, Lucifer and thou Satan . . . hasten at my call ; let no one of you be absent at my summons, inhabitants of Hell ; I am going to make my will.

“*Lucifer.* Good. Make it suitably. After your death, I swear to execute all its clauses.

“*Judas.* I, Judas, I, the infamous, I say first that I give myself to thee, Lucifer, body and soul. May the eternal flames, the agony, the torment and the woe that plunge their roots into the heart of hell, be my assured portion.

“Hither to me, hounds of hell ! Drag my body into infamous places. Let me roll about, torn to shreds, an object of horror and pity ; for agony and not joy have I merited in life.



"My entrails — we will begin there — do I relinquish first of all to the thousand hideous toads of that place; then, I bequeath especially my sense of smell to all the vilest infernal odors.

"I condemn my ears to hear all the cries of terror of the accursed, and my eyes to weep with the damned, for they have merited no less.

"I condemn my tongue and my pale lips to moan forever, from horror, grief, and anguish, without articulate sound; that I may be recognized by the groans that I shall utter from the depths of the abyss of hell, and by my cries when I shall be melted with heat.

"Come, behold me in the pealing of the thunder. I am ready to brave your infernal tempests. I defy the God who created me. I choose my abode forever in the fire near to Satan.

"It is over."

This scene, however, must not be taken as fairly representative. The real power of the mediæval dramatist is best shown when he is dealing with subjects into which his audience can thoroughly enter, and emotions which they completely understand. Such emotions are of necessity few and elementary. Among these, sympathy with the love of parents for children, and with the more obvious forms of physical or mental suffering, is, perhaps, the most marked. A few quotations will illustrate this.

The first example is from the *Chester Play on the Sacrifice of Isaac*. The extract is long; but it must be its own excuse, and an apology is really due for abridging the scene at all.

ABRAHAM.

"Make thee ready, my dear darling,  
For we must do a little thing.  
This wood do on thy back it bring,  
We may no longer abide.

ISAAC.

"Father, I am all ready,  
To do thy bidding most meekly.

Father, I am full sore afraid

To see you bear that drawn sword,  
I hope for all middle earth  
Thou wilt not slay thy child.

ABRAHAM.

"Ah, Isaac, Isaac, I must thee kill!

ISAAC.

"Alas, father, is that thy will?  
Your own child here to spill  
Upon the hillies brink?  
If I have trespassed in any degree  
With a yard you may beat me;  
Put up your sword, if you will be,  
For I am but a child.

ABRAHAM.

"My dear son I am sorry  
To do thee this great annoy:  
God's commandments do must I;  
His works are ever full mild.

ISAAC.

"Would God my mother were here with me;  
She would kneel down upon her knee,  
Praying you, father, if it may be,  
For to save my life.

ABRAHAM.

"Ah, comely creature, but I thee kill,  
I grieve my God, and that full ill.

ISAAC.

"Is it God's will that I be slain?

Marry, father, God forbid  
But you do your offering!  
Father, at home your sons you shall find  
That you must love, by course of kind.  
Be I once out of your mind,  
Your sorrow may soon cease.  
But yet you must do God's bidding.  
Father, tell my mother for nothing.

ABRAHAM.

"Ho, Isaac, Isaac, blessed thou be!  
Amost my wit I lose for thee,  
The blood of thy body so free!  
I am full loathe to shed.

ISAAC.

"Father, seeing thou must do so,  
Let it pass lightly, and over go.  
Kneeling on my knees two,  
Your blessing on me spread.  
Father, I pray you, hide mine eyne,  
That I see not the sword so keen,  
Your stroke, father, will I not see,  
Lest I against it grill.

1 Noble.

ABRAHAM.

"My dear son Isaac, speak no more,  
Thy word's make my heart full sore.

ISAAC.

"Ah, dear father, wherefore, wherefore?  
Seeing I must needs be dead,  
Of one thing I will you pray,  
Since I must die the death today,  
As few strokes as you well may  
When you strike off my head.

ABRAHAM.

"Thy meekness, child, makes me afray,  
My song's will be wale-a waye.

Come hither, my child, thou art so sweet,  
Thou must be bound, both hands and feet.

ISAAC.

"Father, greet well my breth'ren young,  
And pray my mother of her blessing;  
I come no more under her wing.  
Farewell for ever and aye.  
But, father, I cry your mercy  
For all that ever I have trespass'd to thee,  
Forgiven, father, that it may be,  
Until Domesday.

ABRAHAM.

"Now, my dear son, here shalt thou lie.  
Unto my work now must I hie,  
I had as lieve myself to die  
As thou, my dear darling.  
Farewell, my sweet's son of grace.

ISAAC.

"I pray you, father, turn down my face  
A little, while you have space,  
For I am full sore adread.

ABRAHAM.

"Heart, if thou would'st burst in three,  
Thou shalt no longer master me,  
I will no longer let<sup>1</sup> for thee,  
My God I may not grieve.

ISAAC.

"Ah! Mercy, father, why tarry you so?  
Strike off my head, and let me go.

ABRAHAM.

"Ah, son, my heart will break in three  
To hear thee speak such words to me;  
Jesu on me thou have pity,  
That I have most in mind.

ISAAC.

"Now, father, I see that I shall die;  
Almighty God in majesty,

<sup>1</sup> Delay.

My soul I offer unto thee;  
Lord, to it be kind!"

But it is above all in the account of the Passion and death of our Lord that the strength of the Miracle Plays concentrates itself. Inadequate and often painful as the treatment of such a theme must be, there is about these early dramas an earnestness so evident and a reverence so profound that they cannot fail to be impressive. The element on which the writers most dwell, and which they treat with the tenderest sympathy, is the sorrow of the Virgin. Here is an early Breton fragment:—

"While Jesus was upon the cross, his mother chanced in grief—his blessed mother chanced to meet her nephew, the wretched St. John.

"*Mary.* St. John, my nephew, tell me, why do you then not bow to me?

"*St. John.* My holy aunt, I beg you, forgive my discourtesy. I could not clearly see, my eyes are so full of tears. My mind is bewildered, my heart is broken in two. I come from the mountain, and there have I seen a new cross, a cross new and very high—alas, my heart!—that they are raising from the ground. On it is nailed a prophet who has done nothing but good to all the world; to it is fastened a King; to it is nailed a God. Fifteen hundred and sixteen Jews agreed to pass sentence upon your divine Son. Alas! yes, my aunt, I can no longer hide it from you; your poor Son is nailed to this cross.

"*Mary.* My nephew St. John, I can not believe it; do not put death in my soul. I will see for myself whether it is true or false. I see three crosses raised in air, and three men nailed thereon. St. John, St. John, cousin of God, which is my Son?

"*St. John.* It is he who is the first, and on the highest cross. . . . He sends from his side three streams of blood, one to the sea, one to the forests, the last to the plains of the earth.

"Jesus. St. John, St. John, cousin of God, take my poor mother away."

And here, finally, from the Towneley Plays, is part of Mary's lament before the cross:—

"My sorrow it is so sad, no solace may me save.  
Mourning makes me mad, no hope of help I have,  
I am readless<sup>1</sup> and read,<sup>2</sup> for fear that I must rave,  
Nought may make me glad, till I be in my grave.  
To death my dear is driven,  
His robe is all to-riven  
That of me was him given,  
And shapen with my sides.  
These Jews and he have striven,  
And all the bale he bides.  
Alas, my lamb so mild, why wilt thou fare me fro,  
Among these wolves wild, that work on thee this woe?  
From shame who may thee shield, for friendës hast thou foes,  
Alas, my comely child, why wilt thou fare me fro?  
Maidens, make your moan,  
And weep ye, wives, each one,

With me, most wrecche, in wone,  
The child that born was best.  
My heart is stiff as stone  
That for no bayll<sup>3</sup> will brest."<sup>4</sup>

It must be remembered, in the case of all these quotations, that many apparent defects in smoothness and melody are due simply to the change which the language has undergone. Our modern pronunciation eliminates many syllables formerly used, and alters entirely most of the vowel sounds, until, when applied to the old poetry, the result reminds one of Hamerton's famous instance of the Frenchman who had taught himself English, and insisted on reading Tennyson aloud. Perhaps, however, in spite of their modern dress, and of the fragmentary treatment which they have received in this paper, the selections which have been given may awaken in some readers a fresh interest in an attractive and little known portion of our poetic inheritance.

*David A. Coit.*

### GENERAL GORDON AT KARTOUM.

It is a worthy function and a fitting time that now revive for us, with the novelty of an unexpected revelation, one of those stories of heroism and self-sacrifice that bring, most of all in epochs of moral sterility, a refreshing stimulus to one's faith in human nature quite independent of the limitations of race. New light on the life and work of General Gordon would have been welcomed even from an outsider, but to have the famous Englishman's sojourn at Kartoum made visible to us, in all its exciting and melancholy details, by the graphic pen of the chief actor himself is a timely privilege calling for a special gratitude, and shows that after all the

true "psychological moment" in the appearance of books arises in their natural and unpremeditated coincidence with a great public need. It is true that an earlier publication of these Journals,<sup>5</sup> had that been possible, would in no way have impaired the high value which belongs to their disclosures to-day, yet one peruses them now with an interest that far transcends any feeling they would have excited during General Gordon's life. A sense of the final tragedy gives its color to every page, and details that would otherwise have appealed to the mind in the due order of their subordination to each other now assume the significance and solemn-

<sup>1</sup> Counsel-less.

<sup>2</sup> Distracted.

<sup>3</sup> Pain.

<sup>4</sup> Burst.

<sup>5</sup> *The Journals of Major-General C. G. Gor-*

*don, C. B., at Kartoum.* Printed from the original MSS. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 1885.

nity which belong to the narrative as a whole. But the Journals have a higher value than that of their association with the fall of Kartoum. They perform a service for the reading public, the importance of which it would not be easy to exaggerate. On the one hand, they form what must be called the most weighty and authoritative contribution to a notable episode of political history which has yet been made, since, while they clear up much that party controversy had rendered obscure in General Gordon's relations to the British and Egyptian governments, they also reveal, in all their sustained consistency, the long neglect and blundering which, thwarting him at every step, helped to bring on the closing catastrophe by an attitude not generically different from the native treachery to which it was directly due. On the other hand, these records give us, in a narrative of absorbing interest, our last glimpses of the brave soldier and upright man who loved honor better than life, and gladly entered the dark vale at the post of duty.

It is now abundantly manifest that the English government entrusted General Gordon with a mission which, in the nature of things, it was impossible for him to perform. The very multiplicity of his functions and responsibilities confused the problem submitted for his solution, and made the arbitrament of his own conscience a political as well as a moral necessity. As the envoy of her majesty's government, he went to Kartoum simply to report as to the best means of securing the safety of the Egyptian garrisons. As Governor-General of the Soudan, servant of the Khedive and his ministers, — a position assumed with the sanction of the English authorities, — it became his duty, as agreed upon by the two governments, to evacuate the Soudan. In entrusting to him this task, the joint powers expressed, on behalf of the

Egyptian government, "the fullest confidence in his judgment and knowledge of the country, and of his comprehension of the general line of policy to be pursued;" it being further agreed that "no effort was to be wanting on the part of the Cairo authorities, whether English or Egyptian, to afford him all the coöperation and support in their power." The sanction of his appointment as Governor-General really rendered him independent of the home authorities. The character of the work before him, while it closed the field to the hard and fast lines of diplomacy, gave a large and necessary scope to his own discretion. But this liberty of an English agent, practically lent to the Khedive to discharge certain duties in the Soudan, in no way absolved the British government from its promise and obligation of support. The duty of the English cabinet could be suspended only by the canceling of the appointment as Governor-General. While General Gordon held the powers conferred upon him by Egypt, the British ministers were bound by every moral principle and political usage not only to abstain from undue interference with his arrangements, but to aid him in every possible way throughout the duration of his functions at Kartoum.

How, then, did those ministers discharge their obligation towards the man whom they had helped to place in a position perilous at the best of times, but doubly so in the disturbed condition of the Soudan? Their earliest communications with him were of the nature of obstacles. The new Governor-General had seen at once that to evacuate the garrisons without leaving some form of government in the place of that withdrawn would have involved the country in a new anarchy, besides costing thousands of lives. He therefore recommended the appointment of Zubair Pasha, the only man at all fitted to wield power in the Soudan, or make a

firm stand against the Mahdi, after the disappearance of the Egyptian officials. This proposal was repeatedly made, with an urgency growing from month to month with the peril of the situation; yet each time the English government refused its consent. Prejudice against Zubair as a slave-hunter seems to have blinded the home authorities to the wisdom of a necessary appointment; and here we see how the British cabinet, in its eagerness to protect a public principle, — that is, to avoid a party condemnation, — preferred for a moment, or appeared to prefer, a higher form of utilitarianism than that which characterized its political ethics as a whole. But the gravity of this refusal to support the advice from Kartoum cannot be over-estimated. It held General Gordon a prisoner in his own capital, — captive to his own honor, — and kept him there until his life had fallen a sacrifice to his devotion. Believing that he would be supported, he inspired others with his own faith: to desert those who had cast in their lot with his would have been an act of abject cowardice. The help needed by the Governor-General for his own safety was not an expeditionary force of relief, but some one to rule in his place at Kartoum, some one who would inherit the responsibilities into which he had entered towards the people, some one whose authority would oppose a check to the triumphant progress of the Mahdi and stave off the growing forces of disorder. Had England given him Zubair, he could have withdrawn from the city he defended so well, and would have been spared, at least to Europe, if not to England, which did not know how to estimate at their just value his personality and his services. But Zubair was refused; the British offered no one in his place; and so Gordon was handed over to the conquering Arab hordes by the very men who had solemnly pledged themselves to give him every support, and

who were still more bound to aid him by the commonest obligations of blood and race. We do not hesitate to say that, had the solitary hero's danger been as fully realized in this country as it must have been known in England, hundreds of Americans could have been found ready and willing to do more towards securing his safety — and to do it singly, and under the hard conditions of personal adventure — than was ever even attempted, before the time for help had passed, by a powerful government with the whole of England's resources at its back.

But the story is even blacker than this sacrifice of a noble-hearted man has made it. The Journals plainly show that their author was not only not supported, but was thwarted at every step. The most commonplace prudences of a judicious foreign policy seem to have been cast to the winds. Wiseacres in Downing Street, believing they could regulate the Soudan far better than any one stationed at Kartoum, exerted themselves to the utmost to nullify the powers of the Governor-General. The functionary who had been armed with the authority of the Khedive himself, the official who had the power of life and death over a vast territory, was now to become the dummy of Mr. Gladstone's cabinet. He was not to see the Mahdi, not to go to the Bahr Gazelle or Equatorial Provinces, not to have three hundred Turkish troops placed at his disposal, not to have a Firman recognizing a moral control and suzerainty over the Soudan, not to have Indian Moslem troops at Wady Halfa, not to have one hundred British troops at As-souan, not to be aided in smashing the Mahdi, not to have a British diversion at Berber — not, in fine, to have anything that he considered necessary to the proper discharge of his mission. Instead of manfully meeting the difficulties of the situation in the Soudan, and doing this in such a way as to fulfill

their obligations to General Gordon and the Egyptian government, — for the responsibility was not less heavy in the one case than in the other, — the British government decided to shirk the inconveniences inflicted upon them by their own policy; and so while *Punch* was depicting for the world that lonely figure scanning from the battlements of Kartoum the mirage-dimmed horizon for the help that was only to come too late, members of the English cabinet were coolly suggesting that the man whom their inactivity had imprisoned in the Nile desert could leave his post if he liked! In other words, the home authorities were prepared to disown all the pledges which had been given on their behalf and in the name of the Khedive; they were ready to scuttle out of the Soudan, even though the loss of thousands of lives should be an immediate consequence of the withdrawal, and these the lives of the people who had reposed faith in the promises and undertakings of England. How utterly irreconcilable was the English policy, or change of policy, with what General Gordon thought to be his duty as an honorable man must now be clear. He wished to act uprightly towards those who had given him their confidence: what the British government expected of him was a base compromise with his conscience as a soldier and a Christian, — an act so mean that, as he tells us himself, the black sluts would have stoned him had they thought he only meditated it. It is this striking contrast between the scant moral sense of the Gladstone cabinet and the honesty of its quasi-servant at Kartoum that makes these Journals one of the most powerful indictments of the foreign policy of a government we remember ever to have read. Had the English government gained its object, even at the sacrifice of everything highest in individual morality, the course pursued would have had at least a nominal justification.

But not even this petty triumph could be counted. The task of evacuating the garrisons, as General Gordon understood it, was not seriously attempted. The expeditionary force — sent grudgingly, after an almost criminal delay, and dispatched to relieve the Governor-General instead of to aid him in withdrawing the Egyptian forces — began in blundering and ended in catastrophe. Yet the crowning humiliation of the English presence in the Soudan, having regard to political rather than personal issues, was the failure of the British ministers to redeem their military undertakings. "We mean," Cassim el mûs Pasha was informed, "to destroy the power of Mohammed Achmet [the Mahdi] at Kartoum, no matter how long it may take us to do so. You know Gordon Pasha's countrymen are not likely to turn back from any enterprise they have begun until it has been fully accomplished." Who wonders now that in every caravansary and bazaar of the Mohammedan world these pompous words of Lord Wolseley should have added so much to the ridicule and scorn which England's ignominious withdrawal from the Soudan has provoked, not in Europe alone, but in Persia, Arabia, India, and far on towards the Russian frontier?

But a shining figure grows all the brighter amid surrounding gloom, and so General Gordon stands before us in these Journals all the more radiant by contrast with the petty intrigues, the inglorious utilitarianism, and the basely strung morality that beset and vexed his path through life. Not a touch in the picture could be spared. It brings into relief the rare purity of the man's aims, the singular beauty of his moral nature. It shows us how intolerant was his fine feeling of honor of the exigencies of government by party. In reviving some of those higher truths which life in the camp and the council-chamber is sadly apt to dim, it more than suggests



that the secret of Gordon's success with Eastern peoples was that sense of universal justice, that intense sympathy with down-trodden races, which needed no knowledge of Chinese or Arabic to strengthen their appeal to the native heart. The hero of Kartoum proved that he had a purer love of his country than some of those who contrived to thwart him in Downing Street; yet he ranked humanity higher than patriotism, and would not have hesitated to sacrifice a whole cabinet of ministers to the interests of truth. Few will fail to admire, even where they cannot imitate, the robust independence with which he shaped his conduct according to the dictates of his conscience. It was probably this fidelity to himself and to the real England which he loved, not to the false, the time-serving England of the diplomatists, that strewed so many obstacles in his path.

There is still another side to the story told by the Journals now before us. If they depict the man, they also present the soldier. And truly, all wild and perilous elements combine in the narrative of the defense of Kartoum to give it at once the picturesque interest of romance and the startling realism of tragedy. In days of myth-making this solitary warrior of the desert would by this time have disappeared from ordinary history into a vague mist not unlike that which the Skalds wove around Odin and Thor, or the poet legend-tellers contrived for the figures half divine of Lancelot and Galahad. It is the triumph of narratives and times like these that

hero-worship and human interest do not exclude each other. We are sensible of both these elements as the Journals tell us by what rare combination of watchfulness, ingenuity, and effort General Gordon contrived so long to hold his Arab enemies at bay; with what courage, truthfulness, modesty, kindness of heart, and yet with how full a presentiment of the final disaster, this single-handed soldier continued to plan and work in the interests of the population under his care; and last, by what light play of fancy and satire he sought to lighten the monotony of his daily tasks, and forget, if but for a moment, the growing peril of his situation. The knowledge that it was all of no avail, and that help came too late to save the life of such a man, makes it impossible to close the book without a feeling nearly akin to that of personal bereavement.

It should be added that the Journals have been carefully edited by Mr. A. Egmont Hake, whose introduction adequately covers the whole historical period of General Gordon's work in the Soudan. Not less welcome is a statement by Sir Henry W. Gordon regarding his brother's position at Kartoum. The Journals themselves are illustrated by General Gordon's own sketches and maps. The appendices contain a number of important documents — amongst them letters from the Mahdi — now for the first time given to the public. An excellent portrait of General Gordon — by far the best we have seen — faces the title-page of the work.

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#### MCMASTER'S SECOND VOLUME.

WE owe a large debt to Mr. McMaster for the great industry which he has displayed in accumulating and sorting a

mass of detail respecting the every-day life of the American people since the war for independence. The second

volume<sup>1</sup> of his history covers the period from 1790 to 1803, and to illustrate the time he has searched contemporary journals and pamphlets, narratives of travel, diaries, town histories, legislative journals, and other public documents. No student of our history and no general reader can quarrel with an author who has been so diligent and in the main so discriminating in this laborious task; and no matter how many histories of the country may be written, upon how many various plans, this work is likely to remain a repository of curious and suggestive facts.

The comprehensiveness of Mr. McMaster's interest gives the greatest value to the work. Nothing comes amiss, from a "brass-nail-studded hair trunk" to Jay's Treaty, and the orderly manner in which kindred topics are arranged and made to slide into the next theme is of assistance to the reader's memory. The wearisome newspaper warfare, which made the Federalist and Republican contest a "kettlepotomania," has evidently been followed patiently by Mr. McMaster, who has reported it in his digest style, and so given the reader a sufficient notion of its fury without subjecting him to the nauseating details. By means of the full excerpts one is able also to follow the contemporary discussion of such public measures as Jay's Treaty, without himself hunting down the newspapers and pamphlets of the day. A full index adds to the ease with which one consults the book for the light which it sheds on our history.

For, when we have recognized to the full the great value of Mr. McMaster's work, it remains that this value is rather in the illustration of history than in its interpretation. The work is a library of interesting and useful information on a multitude of points touching the life of the people, and it gathers these details into convenient groups. It fol-

lows a careful chronological order, and it intends a consecutive narrative, but it fails to impress one as a clear exponent of the organic growth of the nation; and thus far, at any rate, one may read it without discovering that the author sees into the principles of development, or comprehends the meaning of the movement of that great mass which he describes in so many of its features.

It is this absence of a strong underlying historic thought which makes the book entertaining rather than really instructive, and the reader is carried along from point to point by a certain superficial cleverness of transition in place of a real nexus of purpose. Indeed, these ingenious loops of one subject to another betray an almost whimsical eagerness of the author at times to cajole the reader into further diversion. One is tempted to think of a variety stage, where each successive entertainment is hurried forward as the last scene slips out of the spectator's sight. The very abundance of illustration employed by the author serves to defeat his purpose, by presenting the reader with all the instances, and leaving him to find for himself the principle, and to pass judgment. He cannot see the forest for the trees. This effect is heightened by the rotundity of expression in which the author indulges. The style is the man, and we regret to say that the multitude of words which flow from Mr. McMaster's ready pen bear testimony to the exuberance and fertility of his mind rather than to his power of seeing into his subject, and saving the reader's time by concentrating his attention upon the really fateful historic passages. When a historian, wishing to tell us of Cobett's early life, begins by informing us that he "first saw the light of day" in a farmhouse in the town of Farnham, Surrey; or heralds an account of a launch with the words, "After three

<sup>1</sup> *A History of the People of the United States, from the Revolution to the Civil War.* By JOHN

BACH McMASTER. In five volumes. Volume II. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1885.

years of unavoidable detention the first naval vessel built by the United States under the Constitution was to be committed to the waves;" or prefaces a description of the jerks by the extravagant assertion, "On a sudden this community, which the preachers had often called Satan's stronghold, underwent a moral awakening such as this world had never beheld," we cannot help wishing that he had adopted some model of style less florid, and more than that we wish that he were not so rich in indifferent material. It is a fine thing to value our own history, but if, when we come to display its riches, we dwell endlessly upon petty squabbles and ignoble details, the mere fullness of our chronicle does not save it from meanness.

It is this which disappoints us in Mr. McMaster's treatment. To use a homely phrase, he is trying very hard to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. To take, for example, the chapters which relate the complications of national policy and the contentions of party arising from the state of affairs in Europe. A mighty conflict was going on in the Old World, full of meaning and epochal in its significance. The incidents to which it gave birth were of a kind to tax the powers of the greatest of modern picturesque writers. Our own country, independent in name of Europe, and really independent in its destiny, was yet unavoidably entangled with European affairs. What was going on in France and England and Spain was of the greatest interest in Philadelphia and New York and Boston, while these places were apparently indifferent to the silent, unheroic march of American life to the westward. To trace the real influence of Europe on America at this period, and not to lose sight of the native forces at work, would be one of the most exacting pieces of work to which an historian could put his hand. Our complaint is that Mr. McMaster has confused the theme by his wearisome elaboration of

the newspaper and pamphlet war which was waging on this side of the Atlantic. The significance of such men as John Butler and Matthew Lyon, and of such a fracas as that between Lyon and Griswold, is lifted out of all proportion to real importance, and for page after page we seem to be reveling in the affairs of Little Peddlington.

It seems to us that Mr. McMaster is misled by his authorities, and that a too industrious reading of the *Aurora* and other redoubtable papers has made him not a partisan, but a chameleon. His method of digesting speeches or newspaper articles, and giving the gist of them to the reader, seems to have made him at times scarcely more than a skillful digester. What is the use of retailing at length, even in the form of a report, the scandal concerning Adams and Jefferson which filled the papers of the day? We do not want to read those papers. Mr. McMaster is kind enough to do it for us, and we beg of him not to read so many extracts aloud, but to give us his own judgment of the rights and wrongs in the cases in dispute. We expect him to go through the disagreeable task of making himself acquainted with all the rubbish which political and partisan newspapers contain, but not for the purpose of laying it before us and leaving us to form our conclusions. It may be said that the author shows his judicial mind by such a course. Not at all. A judge is bound to sum up the evidence, and not merely to read us the pleas on both sides. Mr. McMaster's mind is rather that of a reporter than of a judge, and as he passes to one side or the other, in the tiresome battledore and shuttlecock style, we are ready to cry out, But what was the truth, after all? or, Have you not made up your mind yourself?

In all this rhetorical enumeration of endless detail, the real proportions of history become confused, and unless the reader brings to the book a tolerably

distinct notion of the historical development, he is likely to get lost in the woods, and be almost as helpless as if he were to try to pick out the history of a year from the file of a newspaper. In his desire to make a fluent narrative, Mr. McMaster sometimes disregards the needs of the humble reader, and talks about his subject in an allusive way which does not always afford to analysis a distinct and usable fact. Such is his treatment of the Embargo, which never, we think, is sharply defined, but presumes upon the reader's previous knowledge. An illustration of this indirect style is in the reference to Washington's recall to the head of the army in 1798. "To command them" (the regiments), Mr. McMaster says, "two major-generals, an inspector-general, and four brigadiers were provided. The chief command was given to a lieutenant-general, and for this post the whole country agreed that but one man was fit." Singularly enough, our author is entirely silent regarding the quarrel over the second place, and omits wholly any reference to Hamilton's schemes for the army in the West.

It may be a part of Mr. McMaster's

plan to make little of leaders and much of plain people, yet we think it is unfortunate that he should, by the proportion which he follows, give but little hint of the significance of the great men in our early history. The American people was not a headless mob, and the shaping of history which resulted from such leadership as that of Hamilton has not yet ceased to be operative. The picturesque elements in our history are by no means wanting, but they are scarcely to be found in the thin colonialism which waited on European movements. The real points to be emphasized in the early years of the republic are rather the personal and human forces which were at work, and were to justify the promise of democracy. The few men who grasped the political situation are worth the historian's attention far more than the curs who barked at their heels, and the rising tide of democracy was not, we are convinced, so much the result of party conflict as the action of that undercurrent of American life which is only partly revealed in this volume, — a current which had its most notable disclosure in the formation of Western and Southwestern society.

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#### CENTRAL ASIA.

WITHOUT detracting in the least from the merits of Dr. Lausdell's book on Central Asia,<sup>1</sup> it may be said that it is a curious as well as interesting work. The author, an English clergyman, animated by the desire of visiting prisons and hospitals and of placing there copies of the Bible, had no previous preparation for his journey except a similar one which he had taken through Siberia a year or two before.

<sup>1</sup> *Russian Central Asia, including Kuldja, Bokhara, Khiva, and Merv.* By HENRY LAUSDELL.

He evidently made copious notes during his journey, and, on his return to England, studied up his subject as he had not done before, and submitted his manuscript to many persons well qualified to assist him. The scientific parts have been revised by competent authorities. The later chapters of the books were submitted to Mr. Lessar, who is for the moment the great authority on Turkmanian, and it is easy for those acquaint-

D. D. 2 vols. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 1885.

ed with the subject to trace the influence of others equally well posted in different branches. Dr. Lansdell caters to many different tastes, for each of which he has a special index, but with the result of making his work seem rather fragmentary. There are chapters on the history and statistics of the various parts of Central Asia; there are lists of the beasts, birds, and insects as well as of the plants found there; there is a very excellent catalogue of books on Central Asia from the earliest times to the present; and there is also a list of the various texts of Scripture which the author thinks have been illustrated by what he has seen. These are all arranged in such a way, together with an index to the actual journey, that it is possible to read any of these parts separately without touching on the others. His indices are as good as a card catalogue to a library.

To recur to the Scripture texts, it is impossible for any one acquainted with the Old Testament to travel in Central Asia without noticing what a very oriental book it is, and how little Eastern life has changed since the time it was written. On re-reading the Old Testament one sees many passages in a very different light from that which was thrown on them previously, and many of them are more intelligible than they would be to one who had simply journeyed in the Holy Land, where from circumstances there has been more change. Owing to the reasons which prompted his journey, the author has, either consciously or unconsciously, imitated to a great extent one of his predecessors, — Dr. Joseph Wolff, whose travels are exceedingly curious and interesting. This gentleman was a converted Jew, who visited the greater portion of the known and unknown world in both hemispheres for the purpose of carrying the light of the gospel to those of his race. In so doing he had once visited Bokhara and Afghanistan; and

subsequently, after the murders of Connolly and Stoddart, he went again to Bokhara, in order to ascertain their real fate. We may remark parenthetically that Dr. Wolff, owing to the singularity of his adventures, captivated and married Lady Georgiana Walpole, the daughter of the Earl of Orford, and became the father of the present Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, a now well-known member of the conservative party. Dr. Lansdell constantly refers to Dr. Wolff's journeys, and remembers that when that reverend gentleman went to Khiva and Bokhara on his self-imposed mission he dressed himself in a white surplice, — if it were white after a journey of so long a time, — and carried an English Prayer-Book open before him. Perhaps this to some extent accounted for the immunities which were accorded to him, for the Orientals have always a respect for men whom they believe to be idiotic or demented. In similar wise, when he was to be received by the Amir of Bokhara, Dr. Lansdell, wishing to appear as gorgeous as possible, wore a cassock, which, as he says, had previously done duty at a levee at St. James; over that a gorgeous, gold-embroidered Serbian jacket; and over that his scarlet university hood, various Masonic collars and jewels, and his college cap. Feeling that his presents to the Amir were not sufficient, and on the ground that the Amir as well as himself was a Mullah, he graciously presented him with his hood, cap, and Masonic jewels, which were as graciously returned to him the next day by the Amir, who found no use for them. A similar odd vanity appears in the desire which has taken the author to intersperse among the excellent engravings which adorn his book pictures of himself in Khokand armor, in Bokharan robes, and in other curious Oriental attire.

But such reflections really do injustice to the merits of Dr. Lansdell, who made a long and interesting journey,

visiting in succession Kuldja, Tashkent, Khokand, and Samarkand, going thence by the way of Shahr-i-sabz to Rarshi and Bokhara, and thence to Tchardjui on the Oxus, which he descended to the Russian outposts of Petro-Alexandrofsk, visited Khiva, and went from there on by a fatiguing and somewhat adventurous journey to Krosnovodsk on the Caspian. His stay in all places was too short to enable him thoroughly to study the country or to learn anything new; but what he relates abundantly confirms the observations of his Western predecessors in that region. He distributed his Bibles everywhere, giving presents of them even to the Amir of Bokhara and the Khan of Khiva. But as was natural under the circumstances, he abstains from remark on the political condition of the countries through which he passed, and, except in his later chapters on Merv, — which he did not visit, — wrote no essays on the present vexed question of the relations between England and Russia with regard to Central Asia.

For full information on this subject we must turn to the latest English Blue-Books, which to the careful student will give much matter for reflection.<sup>1</sup> Diplomatic documents are not always trustworthy. Even in reading those which now form material for history one must take into account by whom and to whom they were written, what the peculiar circumstances of the case were, and one must be sufficiently acquainted with the subject to be able to read between the lines. Now that it has become the habit to print a selection of dispatches for the information or misinformation of the public, it is still more difficult. It is possible, however, even though some documents may be missing, to learn in the Blue-Books referred to the whole course of the recent negotiations between England and Russia with regard to the Af-

ghan frontier; a curious light is thrown on English policy, and the differences in the methods of the two governments are strongly contrasted.

For some years past, Englishmen, or rather the Indian officers who have guided English opinion, have had the habit of everywhere seeing "keys" in places which were near each other on the map. Having succeeded in making themselves believe that Herat was the key to India, they soon thought that Merv was the key to Herat, and that the Turkomans along the Attrek held the key to Merv. If, therefore, Russia were allowed to put down even one small Turkoman tribe on the shore of the Caspian, she would with these different keys open all these successive doors, and suddenly make her appearance in India. Being, however, unable to keep these various doors closed at such a long distance from her own frontier, England became exceedingly nervous, and as soon as one was opened pestered Russia with questions as to whether she had any purpose of opening the next. In other words, after every Russian expedition against the Turkomans the English government began to ask questions as to whether it was the intention of the Russians to proceed to Merv, which they would "view with alarm." These papers show how often such questions were repeated, and show also how consistent were the replies of Russia, that at that time there was no intention of advancing further, but that it was impossible to tell what might happen in case the Turkomans of Merv were unruly; that in that case they would certainly put them down; and that they always reserve their freedom of action. The knot was cut at last in a different and unexpected way. The elders of Merv themselves asked to be taken under Russian protection. Whether this move were prepared or not by Russia makes little difference. The result was inevitable, and if General Komaroff had

<sup>1</sup> *Parliamentary Papers. Central Asia.* Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. (1885.) London. 1885.



the skill to arrange for the peaceful surrender of Merv he succeeded in saving a large amount of life and treasure; for the defense of Geak Tepi against Skobeleff had cost the Russians more men than all the previous battles and sieges in Central Asia.

When Merv was annexed the English were at first disposed to accuse the Russians of bad faith, which they would scarcely have done if they had read carefully their own previous dispatches. The Russians had no difficulty in showing their consistency, and we may imagine the smile on the Russian ambassador's face when he informed Lord Granville that had the matter not been a surprise, and "had it depended upon them, they would have endeavored to prevent a decision being taken at the moment when England was embarrassed by the affairs of the Soudan." As usual, however, England asked Russia what she intended to do next. The Russians replied that they had no proposals to make, but at the same time reminded the English that two years before they had offered, in order to avoid difficulty, to survey and fix the still unsettled part of the boundary between Afghanistan and the Turkoman Steppe, which they claimed was under Russian influence. This offer they now renewed. Although the English had previously refused it, fearing to commit themselves, they now accepted it with pleasure,—with so much haste, indeed, that they appointed their commissioner and suggested the time and place for meeting before any agreement had been come to as to the basis on which the delimitation of the frontier was to be carried out. This gave rise to considerable dispute. The Russians had desired to begin the work at Khodja-Saleh, on the Oxus, where the boundary was already fixed,—a known point. The English, on the contrary, fearful perhaps that the Russians might advance nearer to Herat, wished first to arrange the extreme southern limit of Russian

possessions in that quarter. Nor were they willing to lay down any principles on which to base the tracing of the frontier; they wished to leave it all to commissioners, desiring even that one of them should be an Afghan. The Russians refused to recognize any Afghan official in the matter, on the ground that if Afghanistan were really under English protection, and a treaty had indeed been made by which the Afghans were to hold no intercourse with foreign nations except through English officials, they preferred their arrangement to be with England alone. They also called the attention of the English government to the difficulties which might arise between commissioners who were ignorant of the country and unacquainted with each other, unless they were to conduct their surveys within a fixed zone in order to carry out an approximate line of frontier, in the same way in which the delimitation of the Persian and Greek frontiers had been made a few years before. Interminable quarrels might arise at each difference of opinion between the commissioners, which would always have to be referred to the home government for arrangement; that in this way there would be the very delay which the English wished so much to avoid, and the two governments would then be obliged to agree upon principles which might as well be laid down at the beginning.

To make a long story short, Russia, after giving way on the point where the delimitation was to begin, and on various minor matters, proposed a zone within which the survey should be made, extending northward into a region which was incontestably Russian, and southward to what Colonel McGregor, in his reports some years before, had considered to be the true northern boundary of Afghanistan. The English consented to the northern limit of the zone, but refused to make a southern line. Meanwhile, the Russian com-

missioner had not started, owing to various unavoidable delays as well as to the desire of his government to settle principles beforehand, while Sir Peter Lumsden, the English commissioner, was on the spot, with an escort of four hundred men besides camp followers, which naturally induced the Afghans to believe that the English were going to support them in whatever they chose to undertake. Negotiations having come to this deadlock, the Russians then suggested, instead of a zone, an actual boundary line, to run somewhat to the north of the southern limit of the proposed zone. Lord Granville refused this, but was then willing to accept a zone, provided that this boundary line were made the southern limit. The Russians insisted on their boundary, and finally, after the Penjdeh affair, the English agreed to it. One or two slight concessions were made by the Emperor; but, practically, the boundary line originally proposed by Russia is the same as that accepted by Lord Granville in an agreement which was still unsigned when the liberal government went out of power.

The Penjdeh incident, although a sharp little fight, is important only as showing how two nations can nearly come to blows over a simple mistake. The Afghans had occupied Penjdeh in June, 1884, after the boundary commission had been proposed and in theory accepted. The Russians, finding their protests unavailing, had advanced on their side, and there were movements of troops, which caused excitement in the country and great uneasiness in London; for there the slightest incident was greatly exaggerated by the press and in Parliament. In spite of entreaties, the Russians had refused to withdraw from their positions unless the Afghans also withdrew from Penjdeh, and claimed the right that as long as the Afghans held any part of the disputed territory they could move their

troops anywhere within the boundary line which they themselves had suggested; further than this they would not go, and they promised to avoid as far as possible any conflict. Matters were in this state when Mr. Gladstone, on the 13th of March, after a hasty reading of the dispatches and a hazy recollection of them, announced in Parliament, much to the surprise of his colleagues, that the Russians had agreed not to advance. Lord Granville found it necessary to telegraph to St. Petersburg, asking the Russian ministry if they were willing to understand their previous assurances as constituting an agreement of this kind. There was a little demur, but there was a desire to help the liberal ministry out of the difficulty into which Mr. Gladstone had put them, and, after the English ambassador had recapitulated a number of points which he said were in Russian occupation, they agreed to advance no further. One of these points was Pul-i-Khisti in Persian, or in Turkoman Dash-kepri, the "stone bridge" over the river Kushk. The other side of the stream had been occupied for a long time by Afghans, and the Russians, although they had been in the neighborhood, had never actually held this point. The agreement was telegraphed from St. Petersburg to General Komaroff, and, finding these points mentioned, he understood that he was to be allowed to occupy them by the English. It was in his effort to maintain his position at Pul-i-Khisti that the conflict with the Afghans came on. England was indignant at what was assumed to be an intended breach of the "sacred covenant;" the views of the English government were telegraphed to their chief ambassadors, and every preparation was made for war. The statements of Sir Peter Lumsden, the English commissioner, who had, however, not been personally on the spot, were so diametrically opposed to those of General Komaroff that they

greatly increased the excitement. It was, however, found, as soon as some one in the English ministry had leisure to look into the affair, — it is said that it was owing to one minister having a cold in his head, which kept him in the house over Sunday, — that the difficulty had all arisen through Sir Peter Lumsden. He had repeatedly stated that the Russians were at Pul-i-Khisti, and now he as positively denied this, saying that he had used that name only as being better known than the place some distance off, where the Russians had actually been. Of course there was little more

to do after this except to allow Sir Peter Lumsden to return, although before that he had received a sharp telegram, telling him "to specify in each case what he knew for certain, what he had reason to believe, and what was merely based on hearsay." The point of honor was saved by an agreement to refer to some foreign sovereign, as an arbitrator, "any misunderstanding with regard to the interpretation of the agreement, if there shall still be found to subsist doubts or differences of opinion." There is an obvious moral in this history, but we leave that to our readers.

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#### THE CONTRIBUTORS' CLUB.

I FIND that years have brought about in me a change of taste as regards literary style. Not that I have learned to consider it a matter of indifference, or to sympathize with a contributor who once expressed in the Club his satisfaction in looking forward to a time when the thing we call style should pass out of literature, leaving to readers only the pleasure of feeling themselves in company with a "just and wholesome mind." I rejoice to believe that such an era will never arrive, since a literature cannot exist without literary styles, more or less strongly marked, good or bad, finished or faulty. Perhaps the advocate of the extreme view above mentioned may have been moved to express himself thus strongly in consequence of a very natural reaction against the "fine" writing, so called, indulged in by many pseudo-cultivated authors of to-day. A plainness approaching to baldness is without doubt infinitely preferable to these tasteless attempts at ornate style. Yet even when language is handled by a master who intends that his words shall serve an æsthetic purpose beyond

the simple setting forth of his thought, it is a question if the purpose does not sometimes defeat itself in the end, if the writer continue to address our ear. For a time he may enchant his readers, as Mr. Ruskin has enchanted so many of us with the music and color of his pages; but do we not after a while find ourselves wearying of this very affluence, and turning away to read in some author who, less captivating on first acquaintance, seems to retain a singular power to please? The preference for simplicity and repose in style grows, I think, with the habitual reader, and the more as he comes to recognize these qualities as the outcome of the finest art, and for that reason the most rarely to be met with. The stately structure of De Quincey's sentences do not fail to impress all who have what may be called the literary sense, and the impressive power of his "impassioned prose" we may continue to feel at a later stage of culture; but it is certain that in the earlier years, when we first knew and reveled in De Quincey, we should not have been susceptible to the attraction

of other writers who now delight our maturer taste. In gratitude for the pleasure he has given me, let me name here an author who possesses in a high degree the charm of an exquisite simplicity, mixed with a graciousness, a sweetness, — there seems no other word for it, — which is all his own. I mean the English author of *Philochristus* and other works, — the Rev. Edwin Abbott. We may be reminded, in reading him, of the author of *Ecce Homo*, but there is a directness and a gentleness in Mr. Abbott's manner, as of friend talking with friend, which is wanting to Mr. Seelye's more professional style. Compare with the first-named author Mr. Matthew Arnold, whose style is simple enough, surely, in the sense of being devoid of ornament, but tending to become wearisome with its trick of repetition and air of condescension to the level of his reader's intelligence. As the perfection of some well-bred persons' manners seems to lie in their having no manner at all, so the never-failing charm of certain writers appears, so far as we can analyze it, to consist in the absolute ease and delicate simplicity of their style. Mr. John Morley, himself a writer of weighty and effective prose, describes Voltaire's style as of "dazzling" simplicity, moving like a translucent mountain stream with swift and animated flow under flashing sunbeams; but again alters his figure, and calls the light that illumines the great Frenchman's page the "piercing metallic brightness of electricity rather than the glowing beam of the sun." Simplicity, then, may be of more than one kind, if Voltaire is to be spoken of as simple, and the brilliant clearness of Voltaire's mode of expression differs from the serene and limpid current of George Sand's best prose. Certain writers of to-day so offend me by the vicious affectation of their style that I have not the patience to read them. Mr. Pater is one of these. I find him unbearably

conscious, without real dignity or virility, his search after recondite words and novel turns of expression proving him, to my mind, a skillful artificer rather than the true artist, whose highest results are obtained at the least apparent expense of means. Mr. Symonds's manner, otherwise agreeable, is marred by something of this same consciousness and elaboration.

Unaffectedness and ease, it is true, do not of themselves alone constitute a graceful manner of writing, but surely they are primary ingredients. It is true also that there is no such thing as an ideal of style, in the sense of a single manner prescribed for all, any more than there is an ideal of painting. Each literary artist has his own manner, as Michael Angelo, and Titian, and Turner each had his. And if culture means anything, it means a catholicity of taste which enables us to delight in Milton, and Hooker, and Taylor, and John Henry Newman, in Addison and Lamb, in Mr. Froude and Mr. Green.

— Why is it that preachers and moralists have from time immemorial preferred to dwell so exclusively on the temptations of riches, neglecting to point out the temptations of poverty? And why is it that the world in general has been so ready to perceive the dangers attendant on the possession of exceptional and brilliant gifts of mind or person, and so slow in recognizing the moral peril to which men may be exposed by the very lack of talents and personal graces? I do not think we commonly conceive in any adequate way of the temptations that may besiege men and women able to appreciate the value of intellectual gifts or personal charms which nature has denied to themselves. Is it easy to be at all times quite reconciled to doing without things which we see making so large a part of the happiness of the lives of more fortunate people? A woman may know herself to be without beauty or fascination of

any sort, yet knowledge of the fact somehow does not suffice to hinder her from longing for admiration and influence; her craving for these we may admit to be foolish, perhaps even sinful, but is it unnatural? It is quite unreasonable for a man to desire distinction and supremacy while aware that he is destitute of the qualities that command them, but however unphilosophical, it is not altogether inexcusable. It is Daniel Deronda, I believe, who says that "some people must be middling,"—an undeniable truth, but one which few care to believe is exemplified in their own particular persons. To know that our faces will no more than just "pass in a crowd," that we are not likely to be remembered for any special grace of manner or conversational charm, to become convinced, sooner or later, that our names will never be identified with any great achievement in art or letters, or in the broader fields of the world's action—does it not cost something to accept such knowledge as simple fact, and bring ourselves to graceful resignation to our entire insignificance?

George Eliot, with her usual power of sympathetic insight into human nature, has touched on this theme more than once in her writings. "Plainness," she says in *Middlemarch*, "has its peculiar temptations as much as beauty. . . . To be spoken of as an ugly thing in contrast with that lovely creature your companion is apt to produce effects beyond a sense of fine veracity and fitness in the phrase. . . . Mary had not attained that perfect good sense and good principle which are usually recommended to the less fortunate girl as if they were to be obtained in quantities ready mixed, with a flavor of resignation as required." Some persons, happily satisfied with their own modicum of intellect, are prone to wonder that others should have vain desires for superior gifts. There are men and women who crave hungrily after the material good

things they *have* not; others, free from this more ignoble appetite, are open to temptation of another sort, and cannot wholly subdue unavailing desires to be what they are not. And the pain of "looking at joy through another's eyes" may be unmixed with mean jealousy. George Eliot's Walpurga, when she is driven to rouse Armgart from selfish despair by dealing her the wound of a faithful friend, asks her if she has ever stopped to think whether Walpurga could possibly need more than "a splendid cousin for my happiness." She reminds Armgart of the numbers who know joy but by negatives, whose

"deepest passion is a pang,  
Till they accept their pauper's heritage,  
And meekly live from out the general store."

Armgart shall hear the truth, bitter but wholesome, from the lame girl whom no one has ever praised for being cheerful. "'It is well,' they said; 'were she cross-grained, she could not be endured.'" This last line has always struck me with its pathetic force. How little account is made of the simple patience and humility with which hundreds of commonplace people bear their humdrum lives, accepting without complaint the restrictions imposed by nature as well as by circumstance. Did they lament and rebel, how intolerable their folly would appear to the well-endowed and prosperous.

—Palaces have their destinies, as well as books and men. That of Chantilly was, like the phoenix, to rise from its ashes, and reveal to us of the nineteenth century, by its present magnificence, something of the splendors of the past.

The Duc d'Aumale has sought consolation and fame in two imperishable works: the Restoration of the Château of Chantilly, and the History of the Condés. As Charles V. evoked the spirit of Charlemagne, so has the Duc d'Aumale evoked that of the hero of his house, and shows himself to be the

heir direct as well of his character and his love of great and beautiful things as of his race. And thus their two warlike figures will remain, however separated as to time, closely united for posterity. Louis de Bourbon and Henri d'Orleans will forever stand side by side, the past and present masters of Chantilly, the hero of Rocroy and the conqueror of the Smala, the friend of Corneille and the member of the Académie Française, the Maréchal of France who conquered Flanders and the general who has described that campaign in pages so glowing with the fire of battle that one would imagine that Condé himself had dictated them.

Were the Prince de Condé to return to his former abode, and with a step heavy with the weight of the laurels of his victories revisit his park, his palace, and its dependencies, he would find as he left them, his Gothic chapel, surmounted by a statue of St. Louis; the Vertugadin, that parterre, designed by Lenôtre, where Louis XIV. loved to wander; the lordly stables, where three hundred horses find ample accommodation. His eyes would dwell again upon the earlier and more austere architecture of that part of the palace which dates from the Montmorencys, as well as upon his own grandiose construction.

Should he enter the great vestibule and turn towards the grand staircase, he might even suppose the court of Louis XIV. to have revived, and would find that the lovely dames to be met there now, their dress and headdress slightly altered, had lost none of the sovereign attractions of their predecessors. All the salons and galleries at Chantilly are open, and resplendent with light and beauty. First see this young and charming Muscovite princess, with her chestnut hair, her eyes sparkling with wit and her smile full of merriment, her slender waist and fully developed shoulders, looking as if she were a divinity escaped from one of

Mignard's pictures; she wears a robe of pale pink satin damasked in silver, with tufts of pink feathers and aigrettes of silver, and her throat is encircled by a necklace of nine rows of glorious pearls. And is not this Madame Henriette de France who appears next before us in the soft dark folds of her velvet dress, blue, of the blue called Eyes of Kings, wearing the colors and the monogram of the House of Orleans, walking like a goddess with her aerial step? No, it is Madame la Duchesse de Chartres, as bewitching as the former, but far more happy.

After the healthy fatigue of the hunt, or the delicious gallop over the thick carpet of autumn leaves, what exquisite pleasure to find one's self, in the evening, in the dazzling atmosphere of this royal dwelling, amid the lights, the flowers, the rare marvels of art, the rustling of silks, the busy hum of joyous converse, the ringing laugh of happy women, and the light rustling of their fans!

Some of these favored guests go here, and some go there, as fancy lists. The ladies group themselves in the White Drawing-Room. The Grand Duke Vladimir amuses himself in the Monkey Room (*Singerie*), a little boudoir peopled with monkeys, dressed in the style of Louis XV. This is a grotesque assembly! The Monkey King, glorying in his purple and scarlet; the Monkey Messenger, bearing gallantly a love token to some fair Sultana; the Huntsman Monkey, the Monkey Musician, the Monkey Apothecary, the Gentleman Monkey, the Dandy Monkey, each believing his grimace alone to be irresistible; the whole furnishing so fine a satire that one is involuntarily reminded of Montesquieu's famous *Lettres Persanes*, and Beaumarchais's *Comedies*, which sting, while they amuse. This High Monkey Court, the work of an artist and satirist, offers no bad resemblance to vain humanity. The



modest evolutionists of our day might look with tenderness upon the images of these little animals, as they might upon the portraits of their ancestors.

The furniture of this Monkeydom is in the style of Louis XV., with Chinese embroideries. All, even to the Sèvres vases in *pâte tendre*, which decorate the mantelpiece, has an air of originality corresponding to this fantastical domain.

In the Pink Drawing-Room the furniture is covered with Gobelin tapestries, the ground of which is a rose shade of most exquisite delicacy. The Vierge d'Orleans, the family treasure, one of the most divine of the works of Raphael, hangs in this room.

In the Salon des Chasses may be seen under convex glass cases, a collection of manuscripts relating to the achievements of the lovers of *vénérerie*, adorned with miniatures, unique in their way.

A new work is rarely added to these relics of the arts, but should one be admitted, it is thereby stamped as a masterpiece of contemporaneous art. Thus in the Salon d'Europe, on the mantelpiece, hung with tapestry of the sixteenth century representing the carrying off of Europa, may be seen a clock from Fromont-Meurice, the Parisian jewelers, a group of ivory and silver worthy to be signed Cellini.

The Gallery of Battles is dedicated to the conqueror of Senef and the companions of his victories. There are the paintings illustrating the glorious life of the man whose fame is still so dear to France: Rocroy, Nordlingen, Lens, Freiburg, the Passage of the Rhine. The portrait of the great captain is perceived through plate glass: his brown head, his eagle nose, and the genius which flashes in his eyes, all bespeak the man.

The library forms a small gallery, and a portrait of the great Condé, taken in his youth, surmounts the high chimney-piece. The prince has placed

his most precious books on the lower shelves in order to have them near at hand. He possesses a rich collection of old French Gothic editions, and Elzevirs and Plantins without number. Modern works, above all those of his colleagues of the Institute, clothed in sumptuous bindings, figure in the place of honor.

The Châtelain of Chantilly is profoundly erudite. One wonders when he could have found time and opportunity to learn so many things, and to class them in such order in his head. So much learning joined to a mind eminently French, quick, lively, and soldier-like, affords incomparable pleasure to his friends. This prince has the art which so few possess, of saying the right thing just when it ought to be said, and in the manner which can give most pleasure in the saying. Few have such tact, not to speak of his noble eloquence.

Not one word of politics was spoken at Chantilly during the four days' reception given in honor of their Russian Highnesses. The topics touched upon were the hunt, literature, pictures, curiosities, the drama, music, the French Academy, travel, etc. The Duc de Chartres related, with his usual vivacity, his excursions in the Caucasus and in Sweden, whence he brought the rarest and most beautiful gold embroidered stuffs, and picturesque jewels, to his wife. The Grand Duke Wladimir, President of the Fine Arts' Society of St. Petersburg, has the passion for the painting and curiosities of the eighteenth century of a true Paris-Athenian.

A banquet was given at Chantilly in honor of the Grand Duke and Grand Duchess, on the occasion of the festival of Saint Hubert, the patron of hunters. In the grand dining hall, high on the table, amidst the sparkle of light and crystal, stood the famous and charming centrepiece, called "*des Chasseurs*,"—a hunt in Sèvres china of the time of

Louis XVI., doubly dear to the Duc d'Aumale as having formerly decorated the table of King Louis Philippe. The great saint, painted by Baudry, seemed to preside over the feast, and his features to bear no slight resemblance to the martial traits of the Duc de Chartres. A host of great ladies added lustre to the

occasion. Among these the Princesses Amélie and Marie d'Orleans were worthy to figure in their uncle's collection of Watteau's pictures — for these two young girls, with their delicately royal profiles and their blonde hair, are often compared to the emblematic lilies of France.

### BOOKS OF THE MONTH.

*Theology and Philosophy.* The Morals of Christ: a comparison with contemporaneous systems, by Austin Bierbower. (Colegrove Book Co., Chicago.) An interesting and forcible little book in which the author undertakes to differentiate Christ's morality from the Jewish or childish, the Pharisaic or ecclesiastic, and the Græco-Roman or worldly. Much of the discrimination is of value, but the discussion is not final, because it disregards that vital element of personality in Christ which separates him from a mere teacher, and his morality from a system of morality. A teacher of morality who says, "I am the Life," cannot be regarded only as a teacher, and a perception of this vital element would correct some of the positions taken by Mr. Bierbower in his attention to the dogmatic view of morality. — *The Nature of Mind and Human Automatism*, by Morton Prince, M. D. (Lippincott.) "The primary object of this book," says the author, "is to discuss certain problems of mind and matter — particularly the relation between the mind and the brain — simply as questions of psychology and physiology, without regard to the bearing they may have on philosophical doctrines. Still, all such questions lie so deeply at the root of the latter, that it is impossible to discuss the one without regarding the effect they have upon the other." He finds himself most in accord with the positions taken by Clifford. He is as uncompromising with mind as the Californians are with the Chinese. The old supernatural agents have been weeded out of our philosophies, and only one remains. "This is mind. This, in its turn, must go. It only remains to decide whether it shall be to-day or to-morrow." There is a temptation to say that Dr. Prince's mind has already gone, but that is merely feeble wit. We leave the real discussion to the psychological-physiological philosophers, who must have mind enough and to spare. — *The Influence of the Apostle Paul on the Development of Christianity*, by Otto Pfeleiderer. Translated by J. F. Smith. (Scribners.) A volume of the Hibbert Lectures, and like previous volumes a free, but not irreverent, rather a sympathetic, handling of fundamental theological doctrines. The

book compels thought, and justifies it. — *The Child's Life and Regeneration* is the title of an essay by John T. Prince (Massachusetts New-Church Union Press, Boston), in which certain elementary truths about education are presented in terms congenial to Swedenborgian writers and readers.

*Biblical Scholarship.* The Revision draws in its train many books, pamphlets, and newspaper notices. Everybody is to be helped to understand it, and one begins to wonder whether all this fury of study will be followed by any patient reading of the book. One of these literary accompaniments is *A Companion to the Revised Old Testament*, by Talbot W. Chambers, who was one of the American Committee. (Funk & Wagnalls.) It is mainly a running commentary on the changes made by the revisers, with a natural defense and magnifying of the work of the American Committee. There is also a general chapter on the value of the Old Testament, and a list of the revisers, with brief sketches. It is odd that neither in this nor in other similar lists which we have seen is there any extended account of Professor McGill, one of the Old Testament Revisers. To be sure, he died shortly after the work began, but nobody seems to know even his first name. He was Professor John McGill, LL. D., Professor of Oriental Languages in the University of St. Andrews. — *Cuneiform Text on a recently discovered cylinder of Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon*, from the original in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Copied, translated, and published by J. F. X. O'Connor, S. J., Woodstock College, Maryland. This is a pamphlet, to be followed later by a commentary. The author presents his work in a modest manner.

*Art.* National Academy Notes and Complete Catalogue, to accompany the sixtieth spring exhibition of the National Academy of Design, New York, by Chas. M. Kurtz (Cassell & Co.): a convenient memorandum-book for the visitor, including brief biographic details of artists. The cuts occasionally given are useless for any purpose except to identify pictures.

